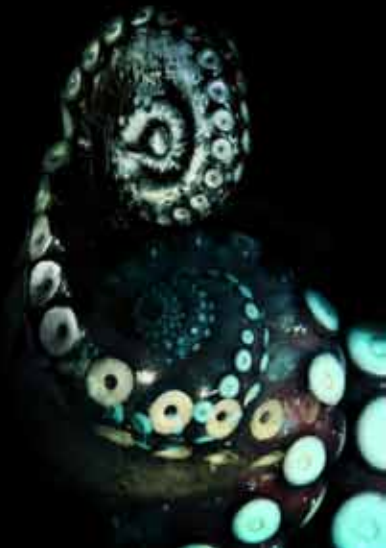


protodimension magazine

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protodimension magazine

ISSUE #5

SUMMER 2010

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Managing Editor: Norm Fenlason

Chief Editor: Lee Williams

Lead Editor: Tad Kelson

Art Direction: Norm Fenlason

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FROM THE SHADOWS

By Lee Williams

Welcome to our fifth issue. We have the usual mixture of material this time around, as well as what will probably be the largest single item we will ever publish in Protodimension. I refer of course to Joe Klemann's excellent *World Of Darkness* adventure "Hunters Hunted". It's very impressive and should keep any group busy for some time. Nicely done Joe!

The rest of this issue contains all manner of goodies: Dave Schuey and Peyton Bisaillon have both sent us some short fiction on the topics of the undead and karma respectively, while well-known game artist Bradley K McDevitt shows us that he too can write well. Matt Ide offers up some useful advice to game masters, and my fellow editor Tad Kelson drops in a Demonseed about a mysterious pictoglyph.

In the What's New department, Linden Dunham gives us our first article written for the *Cold City* game and it's a doozy. He also shares his thoughts on converting from one system to another, in this case Dark Conspiracy and *Cold City*. Very interesting indeed, I am going to get a copy of the game myself to see what the rest of it is like.

There's also a **Braincase Factory** cartoon from Nixon and Dietz, and something called Under The Floorboards from me. It's a bit shorter than usual, but I ran out of things to say. Might be a good thing, I don't know :-)

Finally for this editorial, your trio of editors have an announcement to make...further to Norm's announcement last issue about Dark Conspiracy, and the subsequent traffic on the forums about it possibly not going ahead after all, we can tell you that we do indeed have the licence and we are going ahead with the Dark Conspiracy project!

See the press release on the next page!

Right, I think that covers everything for this issue. Don't forget, #6 is scheduled for release at Halloween so start writing some properly scary stuff if you want to be a part of our humble publication. Remember it's you folks, our readers and contributors, who make the magazine what it is...we just assemble the parts. If there is anything you would like to see, why not have a crack at it yourself?

Any comments, questions, advice or general chit chat can be posted to our forum here:

<http://www.protodimension.com/forums>

Cheers all!
Lee Williams



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

New Edition for the **Dark Conspiracy** Role Playing Game
Saturday July 31, 2010

The Dark never sleeps, it just fades...for a time...but it always comes back.

3Hombres Games are pleased to announce a deal with the owners of the ***Dark Conspiracy***® Role Playing Game for the production of a new edition. The new edition will initially be in electronic format with a hard copy to follow. As part of the agreement, **3Hombres** will produce the first original commercially available adventures and supplements for ***Dark Conspiracy*** in over 10 years.

Look for a new edition of the core rules and all-new adventures to hit electronic publishing outlets in the first quarter of 2011.

Killing Minions. It's what we do.





WHATTA YOU LOOKIN' AT?

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The Old Lady

Pictograph Gaming Weirdness
By C.W. Kelson III (Tad)
For multiple gaming systems



THE SITUATION

The situation depends on what game system or setting the Glyph is encountered in.

FOR CALL OF CTHULHU

The original idea for the glyph was as a key for summoning something or as a means of transportation. A second idea is that it functions similarly to a Tome or Book, imparting knowledge of the Mythos to the characters. It could be used as a Red Herring as well, just a strange carving in an isolated cave location. Another use could be related to cultists or depraved beings using it for their own inscrutable ends or reasons.

So if Old Lady is used for summoning, it has to summon or aid in summoning something. This is left open to The Keeper as to whether it summons something from the existing Mythos or something different and unknown.

If the first option is taken it is suggested it function similar to Shub-Niggurath.

If not then the Keeper is free to choose or create a new being related to The Old Lady *Pictoglyph*, perhaps a hereto unknown



TAKE YOUR SANITY LOSS JUST FOR LOOKING!

fertility being or a strange denizen of a distant dreamland.

If used in this fashion count the Glyph as an altar and allow spells cast relating to a summoning to function with an increased chance of success. This of course does not allow for control or for heightened dismissal.

If used as a Tome the core description (see The Old Lady sidebar) will function for the Keeper to use.

FOR DARK CONSPIRACY

The carving on the cave wall known as The Old Lady is actually one part of a



THE OLD LADY GLYPH

Occult Piece of Carved Knowledge

San Loss	No Loss for Skimming/ 3d6
Cthulhu Mythos	+15%
Study Time	3 weeks
Spells	Call/Dismiss Shub-Niggurath (The Glyph counts as a stone altar) Contact Dark Young Create Gate Fecundity (new spell, see following)

As this tome is really a stone carving, the study time must consist of tracing the diagram, meditating on the meaning and the geometries inherent in the carving, etc. Once time has been spent in study, use an Intelligence instead of Language Skill check to see if understanding has been met. Once the understanding is made, the knowledge of the spells is imparted into the mind of the person, with any SAN loss as needed.

FECUNDITY

New Spell

San Loss	None
POW Cost	1 per 15 minutes spell duration

During the time the spell is in effect the recipient is exceptionally 'Fertile'. Even with precautions being taken, pregnancy will result. A side effect of the spell is a strong urge (no mechanics given) to indulge in physical 'activities' which should lead to pregnancy. The spell also aids in extended physical activities as well. Fecundity can be ended at any time as chosen by the recipient, at which the point of no return will have been crossed.

permanent gate leading to a fecund and fertile proto-dimension and is filled with the offspring of The Old Lady. This can vary but think of the protodimension as a Discontinuity 1, Non-Assimilating splinterland which is the size of an entire universe (effectively infinite). Within the splinterland are all the offspring of The Old Lady. The Gamemaster should think in terms of a perpetually fertile being that spawns plant and animal life equally.

The overall mood or feel to the dimension should be one of infinite variety of things that are crawling, squirming, writhing and groping about in a large family situation. While none of the life forms are inimical to human existence, the proteins will not nourish and so while not poisonous, there is no nutritional value to anything ingested.

The lighting is low and diffuse, covering the entire proto-dimension.

The landscape is very gentle and rolling, with a texture akin to a moist firm tongue. It is left up to the GM whether the entire proto-dimension is The Old Lady (making it self-contained) or if 'it' exists somewhere else. Unless a disruption massive enough to affect a significant portion (left to the GM to decide) of the splinterland, then nothing

the PCs can do will draw the attention of The Old Lady.

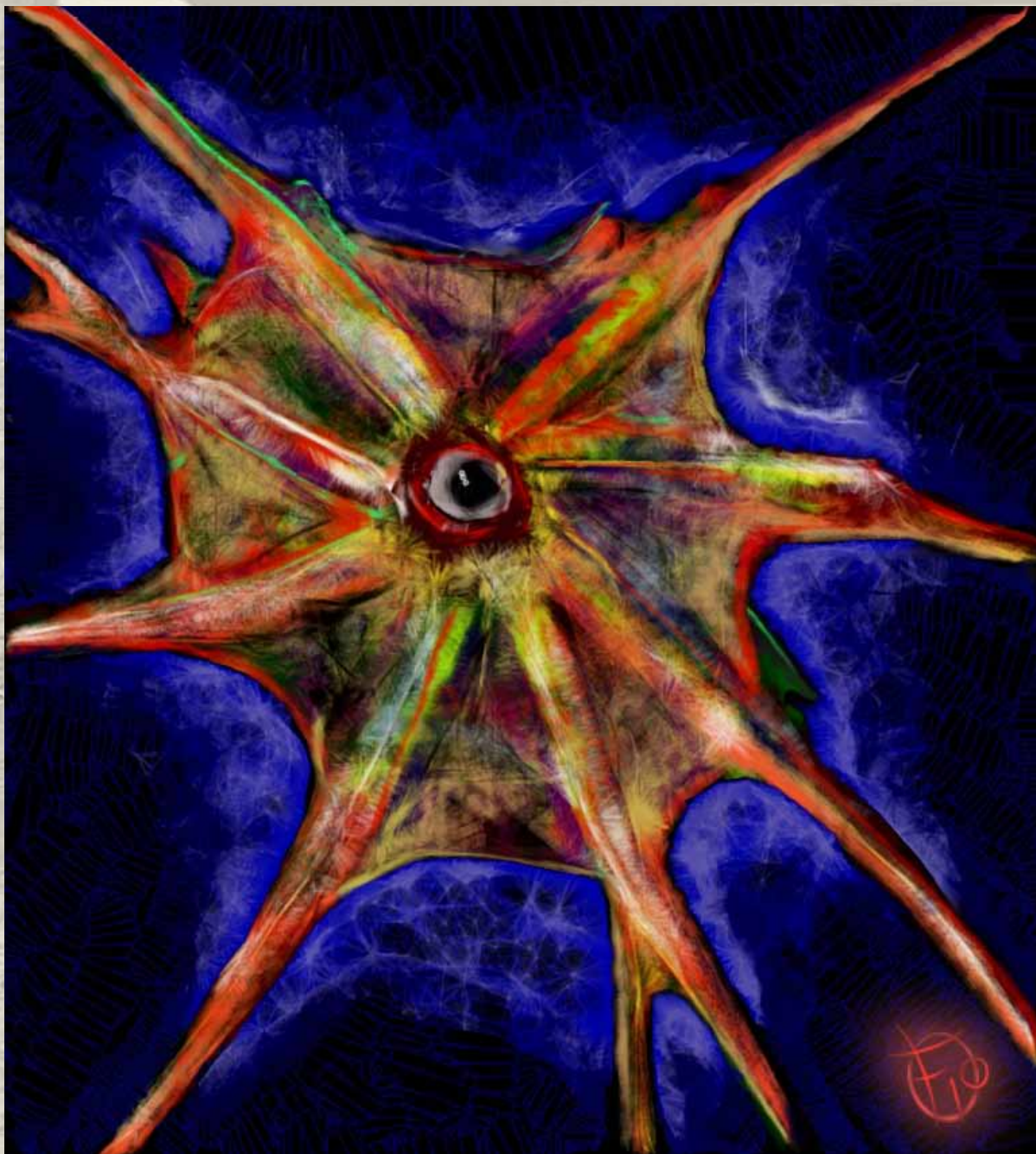
None of the creatures there are stat'd out. None of them have teeth, none are aggressive, they are just very numerous and the general appearance is faintly reminiscent of prehistoric mollusks or shellfish with soft bodies and lots of tentacles for legs. Use the Glyph as inspiration for their appearance.

The Glyph functions as a Dimension Anchor per the DC rules, Page 214 of the 2nd Edition Referees Guide.

To open the gate will be an [Average: Dimension Walk] skill test, when opened on Earth where the Glyph is carved into the stone. Unlike most there is not an electrical or power component to opening the portal, instead it is fertility based. This is a more ephemeral concept than outlined in the rule set. Since it opens into a place where a 'mother' left her children that is the key component.

If the empath attempting to open the portal has not had children, then increase the difficulty by two stages. If they have had children then it is normal. If a female is the empath, then increase the difficulty by one stage, with no change if a male. This is a competition factor for The Old Lady with other "mothers". First judge whether the





player character is a Parent Figure or not and then either raise or lower the difficulty factor by one appropriately as well. The next component for opening the gate is more visceral, it requires living material in contact with it. So for each of the empath's relatives in physical contact with the empath reduce the difficulty by one. Without such support add two levels of difficulty.

This gate is keyed to a solitary stone outcropping in the destination dimension. It is a singular and anomalous feature within the landscape. There are always creatures in proximity, but besides some curiosity, none will approach. Healing and time pass the same as on Earth here, making this a strange location but simple enough to reach to recuperate.

One last aspect is the nature of the entrance to the proto-dimension. The splinterland's Discontinuity is 10 if entering without using the Glyph as a portal. This makes the splinterland exceptionally safe as there is only one place in all of creation, the Glyph on Earth, that is easy to enter or exit back to.

GAME USE AND SPECIFICS

This situation can have multiple uses, depending on what direction the GM or Keeper desires for it. The Pictograph as an image like in a painting or photograph is innocuous. Completely innocent and harmless, only when it is manipulated or studied in person does the potential exist for activation, based on which option or game system in which the item is used.

HAVE FUN WITH THE OLD LADY
AND GOOD GAMING.



10 Ways to Improve Your GM Skills NOW

GM Advice
By Matt Ide

With the new Dungeons and Dragons line that has come out, there has been an influx of new players and dungeon masters. This has led to a new group of people that have joined in this wonderful hobby of ours. This influx has led to many frustrated GMs that are not sure what they are doing and would like some ideas on how to better their skills while sitting behind the shield.

This article is for those of you who are new to role-playing games and would like a bit of advice on how to prepare and run a great adventure and a lasting campaign. If you are an experienced GM or Dungeon Master, this article might shed some light on gaming areas that you've wanted to cultivate. Read on, friends, and hopefully this article will shed some light on parts you wish to work on.

This article is going to break down each of the ten areas that a GM should be familiar with and explain them in a bulleted point fashion.

1. Read the entire adventure. So many GMs and Dungeon Masters jump into a game thinking that they have the gist of what is going to happen in the part of the adventure that they are running. While this may be true, and

you could run that part of the adventure with competence, there comes a problem from not reading ahead and knowing the adventure inside and out. Knowing what happens and who the major players are in the later parts of the game are crucial to being a good GM. Having the knowledge of the whole scope of the adventure helps in really being proactive in what the players decide to do. When the players do something, you as the GM, will be able to foresee how this is going to affect events later on in the adventure. Reading and knowing the entire adventure before beginning the first part of it is a crucial point to being a better GM.

2. Prepare handouts ahead of time. Having handouts ready to go for the players will make you look like a prepared GM that knows their stuff. You might consider yourself a new GM, but by giving out player handouts you have shown that you are up on your game and that you are well prepared. The handouts will impress the players and will give a more realistic adventure, which in turn makes the whole experience for the players that much more enjoyable. Again, this sort of



realism combined with preparedness boosts your GM skills immensely.

3. Keep a list of NPC names behind your screen. By having a list of names for any NPCs with which the players will interact is a great way to keep the game going and not bogging down the adventure while you decide on the name of the barkeeper in town. By having names ready to go, you look like a prepared GM, which you are, and improves your skills as a GM immediately. Don't forget to write down notes on the names you have used, including what the players talked to this NPC about, and what the NPC is doing or where they are working.
4. Flesh out the NPCs. This goes hand in hand with number 3. Take a moment to jot down a few details about your NPCs that the players have interacted with, or will be meeting in the next part of the adventure. Having prepared NPCs is one of the best ways to improve your GM skills immediately. It shows that you are a prepared GM and know what is going on in your adventure. There is no flipping of pages to find information. You have it all prepared ahead of time.

5. Read over rules that you aren't familiar with. This goes hand in hand with reading the entire adventure before running any of it. You can highlight rules and situations that you aren't familiar with. For example, let's say you are reading a section where the players will be fighting on a bridge over a rushing river. You might want to read up on the rules regarding swimming and sinking in armor. You will be prepared for any actions that might come up and you won't have to skim through a rulebook trying to find the proper way to deal with the situation.

This is a big point for improving your GM skills.

6. When first starting the campaign, take a moment to jot down some notes about the players' backgrounds. During the next few adventures, slowly add some details from the character's backgrounds into the game. This will add some realism for the players and they will have a more vested interest in your campaign if they can see that events outside of themselves are going on while they are playing in one area.
7. Another quick way to improve your GM skills is to get to the game a bit



"MOSTLY THEY COME OUT AT NIGHT, MOSTLY...."
NEWT, ALIENS (1986)

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early and set up. Be prepared before the players arrive by reviewing character notes and adventure notes that you might have taken.

8. After each game session, get some player feedback about the adventure that night. Find out if the players are enjoying what is going on, or maybe they would prefer a little less role-playing and more combat; or the other way around. By talking to your players you will find out what sort of adventures they like the most and can cater more to their likes. This will improve your GM skills fast and make the adventures that much more enjoyable to the players.

9. Have your time sheets prepared and ready to go. What this means is that while in the heat of the adventure you will have your notes set up to properly keep track of time, be it rounds or turns. You will want to be able to tell the players when their torch has just about run out while in the dark depths of the third level of your dungeon. These sorts of details make for the best GMs and will provide a level of realism to the game.

10. Remember why you are there. The whole reason you are the GM is be-

cause you like to create the world and populate the world that your players adventure within. You are not there to create road blocks for the players; you are there to referee, when necessary, and play the parts of all the NPCs in your world. Be fair and impartial and above all, be sure to enjoy the role you take in your game.

The biggest thing you could take away from this article in terms of improving your game is being prepared. Having all your notes and rules down, and having read the complete adventure ahead of time will be the fastest way to improve your skills as a GM. Hopefully, with the advice above, you will enjoy countless hours of Game Mastering and remember, the more you do it, the better you will become.



BEING A GM MEANS YOU GET A LOT OF BOOKS!

TABLE TOP GAMING TIP

Playing on the dining room table can cause the lady of the house much grief with metal figures, hard plastic dice, and stacks of books coming and going over its fine finish.

Save yourself some grief by covering the playing area with a clear sheet of acrylic plastic. These sheets are available from my favorite home improvement centers in a variety of sizes. Get one that will fit on your table with no overhang. The sheets also come in thicker sizes, but there is a price premium for larger thicknesses. There is also a product called Lexan that looks like the acrylic sheets, but has much better optical and durability properties. Unless you have a lot of spare cash, you probably do not need Lexan.

Before plopping your new sheet onto the table, you might want to prepare it first. Here is where my favorite comes in: Duct Tape. The sheets come with a paper or plastic backing that protects the sheet from scratches in transit. Peel it away from the edges and lay down an edge using the duct tape. Wrap the tape around to cover the edges and corners. They can be pretty sharp and you will want to protect forearms as well as the table. Peel off the protective material when you are done.

Unfortunately duct tape does not react well with fine wood finishes. So either a tablecloth underneath or adding felt buttons along the duct tape edges does the trick. The felt buttons are used for the legs of furniture on hardwood floors and can be had by the dozens for a couple of bucks. Placing them along the edges right on the duct tape also provides a lift to get the plastic off the table.

In order to get the most from you new table protector, you will want a few water-based media markers in different colors. Be careful using dry-erase markers as some of them are permanent on plexiglass.

I know of at least one gaming craftsman that has scored a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch grid on the back side and then rubbed in some media markers until the lines show on their own. Nice!

Cheers!
Norm



Ich Bin Ein BRAINEATER

Ich Bin Ein Braineater is a scenario for 3+ agents of the Reserve Police Agency. Although presented in the scene format specified in the *Cold City* version 1.1 rulebook, the GM and players should of course feel free to mix and match elements as they see fit, as recommended in the introductory adventure "Prisoner #8". There are numerous Optional Scenes and Extras to facilitate this, as well as giving the GM a choice of alternative story lines. Notes and statistics for running the scenario using *Dark Conspiracy* rules are in square brackets [], with most task rolls having a suggested time scale. A short guide to using *Cold City* as a *Dark Conspiracy* campaign setting appears elsewhere in this magazine.

BACKGROUND

The RPA is well aware that technology developed by Nazi scientists at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Dahlem resulted in the creation of gates to other dimensions. Various creatures from these dimensions were dragged through into this world and attempts made to co-opt them into the German war effort. In the majority of cases the sheer alien nature of these Incursors, as they came to be known, made such attempts futile if not downright dangerous. However, one group of feral human-

oid Incursors showed distinct promise. Christened "Braineaters" by the scientists who brought them to Earth, the Incursors had a violently aggressive pathology that found its ultimate expression in their liking for eating human cerebral matter. It was noted as a positive side effect of their anthropophagy that they could, if only temporarily, acquire the skills of a person whose brain matter they had consumed, e.g. the combat abilities of an enemy soldier.

Under the auspices of Aktion Doppelgänger Braineaters were deployed in the battle for Berlin although not in sufficient numbers to check the Soviet onslaught. The corpses of creatures killed by the Red Army were impounded by GK-11 and removed to Krasnoyarsk-14. A small colony of creatures survived the war and, in the chaos of the immediate post war period, were able to prey on Berlin's population without being detected. In 1950, with the city starting to get back on its feet, the Braineaters' activities have become rather more conspicuous...

SCENE I — THE BRIEFING

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The briefing takes place at 0900 Monday 13th February 1950 at RPA HQ in the

A Brain Sucking Scenario
By Linden Dunham
For Cold City®

0 5 Miles
0 5 Kilometers

EAST
GERMANY

Schönefeld
Airport



Kammergericht. Lt Col Kazakov is the briefing officer.

WHAT HAPPENS

Kazakov tells the PCs that the Volkspolizei have requested RPA assistance following a murder in Stinalallee, one of eastern Berlin's main thoroughfares. The victim, a suspected black marketeer named Wolfgang Kieling, was found by a VoPo patrol in the early hours of this morning. The unusual nature of the victim's injuries convinced the Volkspolizei that this was a case that should be referred to the RPA: The victim had his throat torn out, his skull cracked open, and his brain removed. The body has since been removed to the Charite hospital.

Kazakov suggests that the PCs start their investigation at the murder scene. The VoPo officers who found the body are *in situ* and are waiting to be interviewed by the RPA. Once the interview is concluded the PCs should proceed to the Charite hospital in Mitte. A pathologist should have finished the post mortem on Kieling's body by the time the PCs arrive.

Kazakov concludes the briefing by reminding the PCs that RPA personnel should behave with proper decorum when

carrying out their duties, especially in the Soviet sector.

SCENE II — CRIME SCENE

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

Stinalallee (formerly Frankfurter Allee) is a wide street running roughly east to west through the districts of Friedrichshain and Mitte. In a couple of years time work will begin on turning it into a monumental socialist boulevard lined with eight storey apartment blocks built in wedding cake style with ornate classically detailed façades. It will also be renamed Karl-Marx-Allee following Stalin's posthumous fall from grace. All that lies in the future though. On a cold February morning in 1950 Stinallee is a desolate place with more than its fair share of bomb sites and destroyed buildings: The industrial areas of Friedrichshain made it a regular target for allied bombers during the war and Frankfurter Allee itself formed the main axis of advance into Berlin for the Soviet 5th Shock Army. Facing fierce resistance from the German defenders (including fire from the Friedrichshain flak tower) the Soviet forces adopted the tactic of systematically levelling buildings in order to progress along the street.

The address given to the PCs by Lt Col Kazakov turns out to be a derelict three storey apartment building with most of the roof missing. There is a VoPo car parked outside with two officers sitting in the front seats. They get out of the car as the PCs approach. Their names are Kurt Bortfeldt and Willi Bruckner. Bortfeldt is the older of the two and does most of the talking. He explains that he and Bruckner had received a tip off that the apartment building was being used as a rendezvous by black marketeers with a meeting scheduled for the previous night. They placed the building under surveillance and at 11.55am, on seeing a suspicious figure enter the front hallway from the street, moved in to make an arrest. When they entered the building they found a body, presumably the man they saw in the street, lying in the hall. He had severe head injuries – his skull split wide open and his brain missing. "Nothing there," says Bortfeldt. "Never seen anything like it."

The two VoPo officers give the appearance of being co-operative but their answers tend to be short and lacking in detail. PCs who succeed in a Reason based conflict against the VoPos [Difficult: Psychology roll, 5 mins] realise that the policemen are hiding something. A successful outcome in an Influence based conflict



[Difficult: Interrogation or Persuasion, 5 mins] is needed to make them tell what they know.

Bortfeldt and Bruckner were previously acquainted with Kieling. They allowed him to operate on their patch in return for a weekly "licence fee" paid in hard currency. In return they chased away or arrested Kieling's competitors as well as giving him first refusal on any luxury items they might have impounded. The VoPos had an arrangement to meet Kieling in the apartment block every Sunday night to collect their weekly bribe and discuss any other business they might have. Kieling arrived for the meeting as usual but the VoPos were slightly late. When they entered the building they found Kieling lying at the rear of the hall, with a hideous monstrosity crouched over him, busily engaged in eating the black marketeer's brain. Bortfeldt drew his pistol and shot at the creature which promptly fled at inhuman speed taking the uneaten portion of Kieling's brain with it. Bortfeldt describes the creature as "something like a cross between an insect and an ape, its body and limbs covered in spikes, like a hedgehog".

The VoPos are quite happy to hand the case over to the PCs and forget about it. They don't want to be making reports to

their superiors that will have them classified as fantasists and thus unreliable. They also have somewhere else they'd rather be (see the optional extra in Scene V).

The PCs will probably wish to inspect the scene of Kieling's death.

HALLWAY

Contains a dilapidated spiral staircase to the first and second floor apartments. A separate flight of steps leads down to the cellar. A large, dark, bloodstain at the foot of the staircase marks the place where Kieling met his death. Bone fragments and brain matter can also be discerned in amidst the dried blood. Bullet holes in the rear door of the hallway indicate that Bortfeldt missed when he shot at Kieling's murderer.

THE CELLAR

A trail of gore leads down the steps into this dark and cavernous basement. The floor is strewn with junk and rubble. Torches are needed to follow the splotches of blood and matter towards a hole in the far wall. A tunnel has been dug from the cellar, through the building foundations into the main sewer beneath Stalinallee. The trail ends beside the waste water conduit. Any evidence of the killer's passage

through the sewers has long since been washed away.

APARTMENTS

There are two of these on each floor for a total of six. All furniture, fixtures and fittings have been stripped out or smashed.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Despite the devastation there is a sizeable community still living in the vicinity of Stalinallee. The local people are mostly resentful, and afraid, of authority: They combine a subservient manner with an obstinate refusal to reveal anything useful to those representing officialdom. Interviewing any of them should be treated as a conflict against Moderately Challenging Opposition [Difficult: Persuade or Interrogation, 10 mins]. A successful outcome results in the PCs being told about the prowler who stalks Friedrichshain at night, sometimes seen creeping over piles of rubble or vanishing into alleyways obviously intent on murder and mayhem. There have been numerous disappearances in the last couple of years which are almost certainly the prowler's work. The Volkspolizei have been informed but can't or won't do anything. Frustratingly, descriptions of the prowler and accounts of its depredations are lack-

ing in detail. Sightings always seem to have happened to a friend or relative of the speaker once or twice removed.

OPTIONAL EXTRA

The Braineater that slaughtered Kieling is still in the area. It may stalk the PCs hoping to attack when they are vulnerable e.g. if they're foolish enough to split up while exploring the sewer tunnel. If the creature is massively outnumbered it tries to remain hidden in the shadows before attempting to escape by withdrawing deeper into the sewer system.

If the PCs survive the encounter then they may acquire the corpse of the Braineater, or exceptionally, a live specimen to take back to RPA HQ. They are still none the wiser as to the creature's origin or whether there are more of them lurking in Berlin. Lt Col Kazakov orders them to continue with their investigation: "Find out where it came from, and if there are any more of them."

SCENE III — CHARITE HOSPITAL

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The Charite campus in Mitte lies approximately two miles to the west of Stalinallee. The main hospital building sustained 90%

damage during the war and despite the Charite officially reopening in January 1946, reconstruction work is nowhere near finished. The campus looks more like a building site than a hospital.

There is a Russian military ambulance and a GAZ-67 jeep parked outside the pathology department. Each vehicle contains a driver in military uniform; their blue peaked caps indicate that they are MGB personnel.

WHAT HAPPENS

The MGB men in the vehicles watch the PCs as they make their way into the pathology building but don't make any attempt to stop them. The PCs find another four MGB men inside. Their leader, Capt. Odinokov, is in the process of browbeating a white coated pathologist into handing over Kieling's corpse along with the post mortem report (and any carbons). If the PCs intervene at this point some form of conflict would seem to be inevitable, probably Influence based. The likely stakes for both sides are who gets custody of the corpse and associated paperwork. A successful outcome for the PCs results in the departure of Odinokov who threatens dire retribution against the RPA in general and any Soviet PCs in particular.

PCs who speak with Dr Ulrich, the pathologist, find that he has been left badly shaken by the MGB's visit. Nonetheless, he can be persuaded to provide a verbal summary of his post mortem findings if the PCs need it.

Kieling died as a result of having his throat torn out. His skull was then split open with a sharp tool like a knife or a chisel. This would have taken considerable force. His brain was then removed, although not with any great precision.

OPTIONAL EXTRA

The PCs may make enquiries with the MGB, on their own account, or through official RPA channels. In either case the response is the same: A blanket denial of any interest in Wolfgang Kieling and/or his mortal remains. Although it may appear that the MGB are being typically mendacious they are telling the truth on this occasion. This will be subsequently confirmed to any PCs with MGB affiliations, along with the suggestion that the imposters at the hospital were agents of GK-11.

In the event that any PCs are members of GK-11 their parent organisation won't respond to any questions about the situation at Charite. Instead an order is issued to sabotage the Kieling investigation



and ensure that GK-11's interest in the case does not become known to the RPA Directorate Committee.

SCENE IV — THE FLAT ON ANDREASTRASSE

The PCs may decide to visit Kieling's home to see if it holds any clues as to his demise. Obtaining his address from the RPA or even the Volkspolizei is purely routine: Ground floor apartment, 65 Andreastrasse.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

Andreastrasse runs south from Stalinallee down to the River Spree. Number 65 is a narrow three storey building miraculously untouched by the devastation visited on the surrounding area. There is one apartment on each floor. The interior of Kieling's home is surprisingly well appointed, with new furniture and fittings. There is no sign of the austerity that is a feature of so many other German homes. The reason for this can be found in the back room of the apartment. Kieling was a highly successful black marketeer and the back room is his warehouse. It is a treasure trove of illicit goods including Scotch, cigarettes, chocolate and tinned foodstuffs, plus a few cameras and watches (the latter being especially popular with

Soviet soldiers). There is also a metal lock box hidden under a loose floorboard containing just under \$2,000 in US dollars.

WHAT HAPPENS

Regardless of the time that the PCs visit they find Kieling's girlfriend, Helga Raumer, in residence. Helga has been informed of Kieling's death and although upset agrees to be interviewed by the PCs. Unfortunately, she can't tell them anything useful about Kieling's murder. At least not directly. She believes that he was killed by Borfeldt and Buckner who she characterises as "a pair of greedy bastards. Always with their hands out, always wanting more."

Helga believes that the two VoPos murdered Wolfgang after he objected to their latest attempt to extort an increased licensed fee. She can give chapter and verse on Kieling's arrangement with Borfeldt and Buckner and will be happy to do so if the PCs make it clear they're not interested in the contents of the back room and/or they give the impression that they're willing to give the VoPos a hard time. This can give PCs who failed to get the full story of Borfeldt and Buckner's encounter with the Braineater some leverage to make the two bent cops tell what they saw.

OPTIONAL EXTRA

While the PCs are interviewing Helga, Borfeldt and Buckner arrive outside the apartment building. Their intention is to "impound" Kieling's merchandise i.e. steal it and sell it on to another black marketeer. They have commandeered a Wehrmacht surplus Opel truck for the purpose. They aren't expecting much trouble from Helga. Depending on how discrete the PCs have been (e.g. parking their transport at the rear of the building) the VoPos may not realise they are there.

The VoPos plan to enter as if carrying out a raid, banging on the door and barging into the apartment with Stg 44 assault rifles at the ready. They are surprised to see the PCs but Borfeldt quickly recovers and tries to bluff his way out of the situation saying that the Volkspolizei have received a tip off that this address is being used to store black market goods. Any subsequent events are probably going to depend on a conflict resolution. The stakes for the VoPos are to leave the apartment with their professional dignity intact, ideally with Kieling and Raumer's black market stash.



SCENE V - RESEARCH

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The RPA archive is in one of the basements under The Kammergericht. Dusty brown files spill out of shelves that stretch the length of the huge room which is under lit, damp and draughty.

WHAT HAPPENS

Although the PCs have the assistance of the duty archivist and clerks, they still face a long and tedious trawl through a huge card index system which documents unusual phenomena, bizarre deaths, strange sightings and any subsequent RPA investigation. Even when there is a promising reference there is no guarantee that the file they want will be there. Deliberate misfiling or removal by GK-11 infiltrators (amongst others) is an ever present possibility. Searching the archive should be considered a Reason based conflict against Challenging Opposition [Average: Education, 1 hour]. Having the assistance of the staff can be considered a tool as per page 59 of the *Cold City* rulebook.

The following documents may be found:

1. Volkspolizei Memorandum: A memo from the Volkspolizei's RPA liaison section, based at the Berlin

Praesidium in Mitte (VoPo HQ). The memo is dated 15th January 1950 and addressed to the RPA Directorate Committee. Such communications are fairly routine as there is a formal protocol in place for the liaison section to forward material that might be of interest to the RPA. Much of it is subject to vetting by the Soviets but some useful items still manage to slip through the bureaucratic net, as appears to have happened in this case. The memo concerns an alleged prowler in the Friedrichshain district (see Document Extract #1).

The memo is marked "No Further Action", dated 17th January 1950, and signed by Major Coubertin.

2. A briefing note prepared in 1948 by Myles Wright regarding the various twisted science projects undertaken by the Nazi scientific establishment. One section summarises what the RPA knows about Aktion Doppelgänger, (or at least what Wright wants them to know) along with some speculation as to its exact nature (see Document Extract #2).

SCENE VI - HIDDEN AGENDAS/ SECRET INFORMATION

RPA personnel who are members of, or have good connections with, one of the notable organisations listed in the rulebook may be able to obtain information relevant to the current case. There will be a price tag attached to the provision of such information in terms of a favour asked in return, or the furthering of a national agenda.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The meeting takes place at any venue the GM and individual players agree is appropriate. PCs favouring the cloak-and-dagger approach can meet with their contact in one of the more out of the way locations listed in page 54 of the rulebook. The PC may need to take precautions against being followed, not least by their colleagues.

WHAT HAPPENS

The PC is provided with information. The exact nature of the information depends on the organisation the PC is involved with:

GRU/RED ARMY

Several units encountered fascist Spezialeinsatztruppen – reanimated corpses – in the Battle of Berlin. The



Reserve Police Agency HQ, Kammergericht, Berlin



From: Volkspolizei-RPA liaison section
 Berlin Praesidium
 To: RPA Directorate Committee

Date: January 15, 1950

Subject: Nocturnal Sightings in Friedrichshain

Rumours continue to persist amongst the local population of a nocturnal prowler assaulting residents and attempting to gain entry to dwellings. An extensive investigation by officers has failed to find any real evidence that such a personage exists. Sightings are invariably conveyed third hand and are lacking in detail. The prowler is variously described as being dressed in black or grey, two metres in height, grossly deformed and/or highly athletic being capable of sustained sprints and impressive feats of acrobatics. One resident, Gerhard Einherth, told officers that he had seen the prowler looking in through his kitchen window, and that it resembled a giant insect with glowing yellow eyes. It should be noted that Einherth is a habitual drunkard and has been arrested numerous times for anti-social conduct. His testimony is thus hardly credible.

Despite the paucity of evidence in this matter it may be one which you feel falls within your Agency's remit. If so, I would request that you liaise with this office via the usual channels before mounting any investigation.

NO FURTHER ACTION

J Coubertin
17th January 1950

DOCUMENT EXTRACT #1

Rpt No.: TN-00456-1948, April 24, 1948
Subject: Twisted Technology Projects Undertaken by Nazi Scientific Establishment

Aktion Doppelganger involved the removal of at least one of the gate machines from the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute at Dahlem in early Spring 1945. The gate(s) were sited in the eastern suburbs of Berlin seemingly in preparation for the Soviet assault on the city. Information on their exact purpose is lacking but my belief is that that the Germans were attempting to use the gates as a means to deploy Incursors against the Red Army. The SS-Ahenerbe's use of reanimated corpses - Spezialensatztruppen - on the eastern front is of course fairly well documented, and Aktion Doppelganger may have been an attempt to use Incursors in a similar capacity. Regrettably, the RPA does not possess any evidence that would confirm this. This may be due to the nature of the entities involved. The use of the word Doppelganger suggests imitative abilities and the Incursors may be able to pass for human and even mimic particular individuals. The potential for creatures with such abilities to act as infiltrators and pass undetected is obvious. This of course assumes that they could be controlled by those responsible for summoning them in the first place. Incursors are notoriously self willed, even if their motivation frequently remains opaque.

fascists also made use of other entities, and elements of the 73rd Rifle Regiment reported a brief skirmish with creatures resembling a bizarre cross between men and hedgehogs in the vicinity of what is now Stalinallee. Deployment against Soviet forces was an unmitigated disaster: The creatures were found in the upstairs of a shop premises busily consuming the brains of a Hitler Youth squad they had evidently just slaughtered. After a short battle with Soviet troops the creatures were themselves killed. Their remains were taken into custody by the NKVD.

MGB

As above but the PC is also told that the NKVD was soon made to cede custody of the specimens and jurisdiction in the matter to GK-11.

GK-II

Information as per the organisations above but the PC is also charged with ensuring that the RPA does not recover any Braineaters, either alive or in any condition suitable for study. If the PC were to capture a live Braineater for GK-11's benefit then the upper echelons of the committee would be favourably disposed towards them in the future.

BRITISH ARMY

Large numbers of specialist personnel from a diverse range of units (sappers, paratroops, intelligence corps, SAS, Royal Marine commandos) were assigned to Operation Strangle in 1945. Strangle was a joint Western Allied operation whose mission was to acquire advanced Nazi technology, or at least deny its use to the Soviets. One unit, Detachment WETHERBY, engaged in the latter task reported meeting with strange humanoid creatures in a bunker complex in Friedrichshain. Although several of the creatures were killed in the close quarter battle that followed it's possible that some survived and remain active in the area.

BERB

As per British Army but with the additional details that Operation Strangle was directed specifically against "twisted" technology and that the Friedrichshain bunker contained a gate machine. Also it would be appreciated if the PC could recover one of the Braineaters alive so that the "chaps at Porton can take a look at it."

SIS

Information as per British Army, along with confirmation that Detachment WETHERBY's mission was to destroy a

gate machine. Interrogation of a captured SS officer revealed that at least one of the machines had been removed from the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute and deployed in the eastern districts of Berlin in late April 1945. The purpose of Aktion Doppelgänger as it was known was to obtain sizeable numbers of a particularly brutish Incursor for use against Soviet troops if, or rather when, they reached Berlin. The creatures encountered by Detachment WETHERBY were almost certainly brought through by the gate machine during Aktion Doppelgänger. If any of the creatures survive they are to be killed and their corpses destroyed: "We don't want the spods at BERB getting hold of them, dead or alive".

All of the British organisations can provide the location of the Friedrichshain bunker which should make finding the Braineaters easier. The PC may find it difficult to explain to their RPA colleagues how they were able to locate the Braineaters' lair so quickly though...

CIA/515TH INTELLIGENCE WING

The British encountered brain eating humanoid entities during Operation Strangle. They're cagey about the details but it involved a mission in Friedrichshain. As to the creatures themselves it seems likely that

they're either some kind of Alternative or a fairly primitive type of Incursor.

GEHLEN ORGANISATION

Information as per the American organisations above. The Gehlen Org has since recruited Otto Harzer (see document #4) but the PC won't be told that. If a PC learns of Harzer's existence he will be told that the former major now works for the Gehlen Org and is not to be bothered in connection with this matter. The PCs contact has spoken with Harzer and obtained all relevant information.

If the PCs don't have the necessary contacts then they can request help from their RPA superiors: Lt Col Kazakov, Maj. Spiegelman, or Myles Wright can make use of their own personal intelligence networks to obtain some of the nationality specific information above. It won't be as extensive as if the PCs had a direct source but there should be enough detail to point their investigation in the right direction. Again, there will be a price for this with the relevant committee member regarding the PCs as owing them a favour. They are certain to call on the PCs in the future, perhaps to undertake a dangerous mission that furthers their own national or personal agenda.

Magda Bremmer and Major Coubertin are unlikely to be of assistance in this context. Bremmer is out of the loop with regard to Aktion Doppelgänger and Operation Strangle. Coubertin could provide Soviet specific information but it is difficult for him to do so without compromising himself. If asked about the Volkspolizei memo he says that the information on the Friedrichshain Prowler was too vague to justify committing RPA resources to investigate further. "A question of priorities, mes amis." Of course it's also possible that his Soviet handlers have leaned on him to quash any RPA investigation so that GK-11 can have a clear field.

Document extracts #3 and #4 can be provided at the GM's discretion, although realistically they're only going to be available to PCs with Soviet or British intelligence contacts respectively. Given the sensitive nature of the material the PC will only be allowed to read the document at the meeting before being required to return it to their contact.

OPTIONAL SCENE — HUNTING DOWN HARZER

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

PCs who learn of Harzer's existence may want to talk to him. If so he proves

fairly easy to find. Having been granted a Persilschein (denazification certificate) he lives quite openly in the Grunewald district with his wife and young family. Harzer seems to have done well for himself. Grunewald, in the American sector, is one of Berlin's most affluent suburbs and the Harzers occupy a pleasant villa on Koenigsallee. Herr Harzer has what appears to be a good job as the Berlin representative of the South German Industrial Development Organisation.

WHAT HAPPENS

Harzer isn't keen on talking about his time in the SS and especially not his assignment to Aktion Doppelgänger. Results from any successful conflict with him[Formidable: Interrogation or Persuasion, 15 mins] can include Harzer admitting he was in charge of an SS unit ordered to guard one of the Dahlem gate machines that were relocated to Friedrichshain in 1945, providing a description of the Incursors brought through the gate, outlining his involvement in Operation Strangle and even an offer to show the RPA agents the bunker where the gate was located.

Note that Harzer's employer is a Gehlen front. Depending on how he is approached, Harzer may subsequently complain to his

superiors, who then refer the matter to their CIA masters, or directly to the RPA, resulting in a bureaucratic bollocking (or worse) for the PCs.

SCENE VI — STAKE OUT ON STALINALLEE

Depending on how successful their inquiries have been the PCs should have at least a general idea where the Braineaters are most likely to be found. Well connected or savvy PCs will know the exact location of the complex and can proceed straight to Scene VII – The Bunker. Otherwise it is a matter of casing the Friedrichshain district looking for signs of Braineater activity.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

The area around Stalinallee again, description broadly as for Scene II, a landscape of rubble, bomb sites and wrecked buildings. Some buildings remain inhabitable and the occupants may view a multinational RPA group patrolling their neighbourhood with curiosity, and more than a little suspicion.

WHAT HAPPENS

This should ultimately depend on the outcome of a conflict resolution. The likely stakes for the PCs are locating the bunker complex that contained the gate machine

After Action Report, 26 April 1945

We had been taking fire from a shop building on Grosse Frankfurter Strasse for most of the evening. Around eight-fifteen the firing stopped and some fifteen minutes later I decided to lead a small detachment to reconnoitre the building and ascertain if it had been abandoned by the enemy.

We crossed Grosse Frankfurter Strasse without opposition and entered the enemy strongpoint. Inside we found the corpses of around a dozen Hitler Youth Troops. All appeared to have been killed in close combat. The bodies exhibited stab wound and severe head injuries. On moving further into the building we came to a storeroom. Surreptitious observation through a transom window above the door revealed a number of things - roughly human shaped but with grey skin covered in spines and insect like heads. A number of them were consuming human brain matter, probably taken from the Hitler Youth casualties. Others had equipped themselves with German weapons and appeared to be familiarising themselves with submachineguns, storm rifles and panzerfausts.

I decided to treat the occupants of the storeroom as hostile. We threw grenades in through the transom window. Any creatures that tried to escape through the doorway were shot. There were no survivors.

Shortly afterwards we were joined by the rest of the battalion. I showed the bodies in the storeroom to battalion commander Major Zubkov, and Commissar Gorin. They advised me that the creatures were the result of Nazi experiments. Their disposal of the cadavers and all connected matters were to be placed under the jurisdiction of the NKVD with immediate effect.

Lieutenant Oleg Borisov
1st Company, 2nd Battalion
73rd Rifle Regiment

DOCUMENT EXTRACT #3

From transcript of debriefing of Captain Nigel Owens, Royal Engineers, commander of Special Detachment WHETHERBY, Operation Strangle, dated 6th October 1945.

I didn't trust Harzer, not one bit. He was a former SS-Hauptsturmführer who'd come over to our side, offering information in exchange for us not handing him over to the Russians. I knew he'd been in the Das Reich division - one of those outfits for whom burning down a peasant village was all in a day's work - so not likely to be popular with our Soviet allies. Towards the end of the war he'd been posted to the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute. He wasn't a boffin but he knew where a lot of Jerry's weird science stuff was located. Apparently he'd been in charge of guarding a lot of it. He had the look of a man who'd sell his grandmother for a couple of marks but I have to admit on this occasion he was as good as his word.

Harzer led us through the sewer tunnels to the bunker complex underneath Friedrichshain. We found the gate machine and generators in the main chamber. We were in the middle of laying charges when they struck: Hideous grey creatures that looked a bit like men but very tall and covered in spikes like a hedgehog. One of them drove a spike through Private Eddowes neck before any of use could react. Well that woke us up all right. We waded in and let them have it with our sten guns. I vividly recall, in amongst all the mayhem, seeing the creature that killed Eddowes calm squatting over his corpse, breaking up the skull and yanking out the brain which it calmly proceeded to eat. I tried to shoot it but my sten jammed - bloody plumber's nightmare, they never were any good. How many times have they been improved now? Doesn't matter, you can't polish a turd. Anyway, by the time I cleared the stoppage the thing had gone, done a disappearing act with its pals, those we hadn't killed. Final tally: One of ours dead and two wounded for five of them.

We finished setting the charges, retired to a safe distance and blew the pace to kingdom come. On the way back I asked Harzer if he knew what the creatures were, whether they were these Alternatives we'd been briefed about. Harzer told me they were Incursors - drawn into our world through the gate. When I asked him why, he just said, "Desperation."

DOCUMENT EXTRACT #4:

and now serves as home to the Braineaters. Two possible ways this can happen are detailed below:

(a) *Find the Door*: Reason roll versus Challenging opposition [Formidable: Observation, 1 day]. The PCs comb the bomb sites of Friedrichshain searching for the Braineaters' lair. Eventually they find the entrance to what looks like a disused air raid shelter. The steel door to the shelter is unlocked. Behind the door a flight of stairs leads downwards...

(b) *Catch the Braineater*: The PCs patrol the district, or find a good vantage point to survey it, in the hope of spotting a Braineater. As the creatures are nocturnal this strategy will only work if conducted at night. PCs should succeed in a Reason roll vs the Braineater's Action stat [Formidable: Observation, 1 day] to spot one of the creatures creeping stealthily over the rubble. Following it back to the bunker entrance without being observed requires a second roll opposing the PC's Action stat against the Braineater's Reason [Difficult: Stalking, 5 mins].

In each of the above cases if the PCs fail to resolve the conflict they should be

allowed another attempt every twenty four hours until they are successful. However, the longer they spend in Friedrichshain the more likely it is they will attract unwelcome attention from the locals, the Volkspolizei, or the Soviet authorities (which can include GK-11 if the GM is feeling unkind, see Optional Scene – GK-11 Ambush).

OPTIONAL SCENE – GK-11 AMBUSH

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

Somewhere out of the way with no witnesses, e.g. at night in the rubble of Friedrichshain.

WHAT HAPPENS

Captain Odinkov decides that he wants the RPA agents out of his hair. Their approach will be stealthy, or may involve some kind of deception. The most likely tactic is for the GK-11 troops to lie in wait for the PCs and attack them at an opportune moment. Odinkov and his men will be dressed in civilian clothes and equipped with German MP40 machine pistols. The PCs' deaths will be made to look like the result of a Werewolf guerrilla attack, or their blundering into a gun battle with a criminal gang.

SCENE VII – THE BUNKER

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

A subterranean complex converted from an air raid shelter. It was severely damaged by demolition charges set by Detachment WETHERBY. The power is out and the complex is in darkness. Corridors and rooms are partially obstructed by fallen rubble and further falls cannot be ruled out. Any attempts to move quietly should be treated as an Action based conflict against Moderately Challenging Opposition [Difficult: Stealth, 30 seconds]. Consequences for failure can range from minor injury sustained through tripping over rubble all the way to a major structural collapse. There is also the possibility of alerting the Braineaters to the PCs' presence. The Braineaters are sufficiently dexterous to navigate their way through the complex without having to worry about causing any further damage.

Specific details of the bunker are shown on Map 1.

WHAT HAPPENS

The PCs explore the bunker. They gain an understanding of its purpose. At some point they encounter the Braineaters. A conflict ensues with survival being the likely stakes for both sides. If the PCs are

MAP I: THE BUNKER

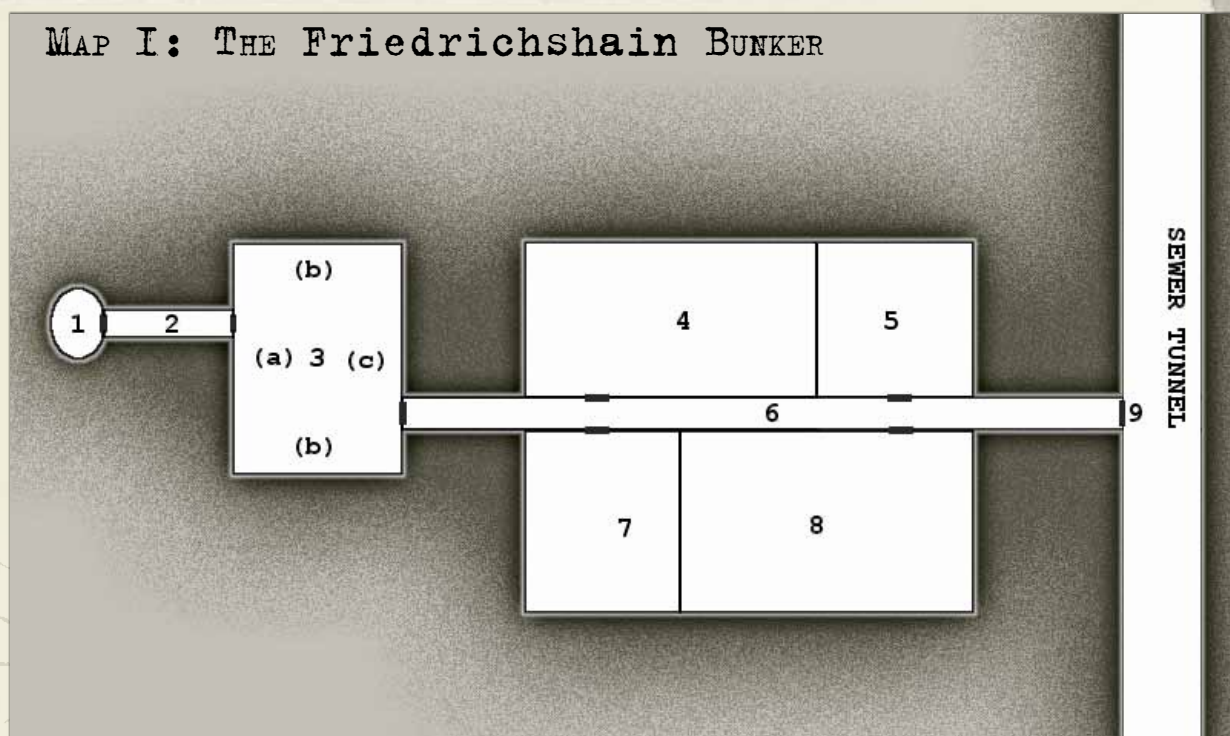
1. *Entry/Exit*: A steep flight of stairs connects the complex to the surface. An unlocked steel door opens onto a bomb site 500m north of the building where Wolfgang Kieling's body was found by the Volkspolizei. The Braineaters use this doorway for entry and egress.
2. *Corridor*: Connects the entry/exit to the Gate Room (3).
3. *Gate Room*: The chamber where Nazi scientists assigned to Aktion Doppelgänger summoned Braineaters from an alien dimension. A row of steel bars protected the scientists from the creatures they brought into the world. Once drawn through the gate the Braineaters had little choice but to leave the complex via the Entry/Exit (1). Recalcitrant creatures would be dealt with by heavily armed SS guards.

This room bore the brunt of the explosion when the charges left by Detachment WETHERBY detonated. The bars are twisted and bent and it is quite easy for human sized targets to pass between them. The components of the gate, all damaged by the explosion, but still recognisable are:

- (a) *Arch*: A simple rectangular doorway made from steel bars and covered in wiring. A sheet metal lid used to seal the doorway lies off to one side. [The doorway is the dimensional anchor]
- (b) *Generators*: These were used to power the gateway and were connected to it by thick cables.
- (c) *Console*: A metal desk surmounted by a control panel containing dials and switches for activating/deactivating the gate, regulating its power supply and opening and closing the metal lid.

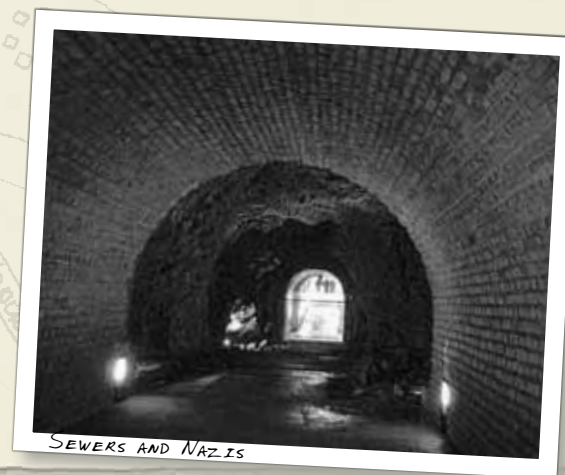
It is possible to reactivate the gate but it requires replacement of the generators and extensive repairs to the console and arch. If the PCs insist on attempting this it should be treated as a Reason based conflict against Very Challenging Opposition [Formidable: Electronics, 1 day, to repair the anchor and console plus Average: Electronics or Engineer to replace the generators and connect them to the anchor, Time=12

MAP I: THE Friedrichshain BUNKER



- hours]. Likely consequences are opening a portal to the Braineaters' home dimension enabling more of the creatures to come through. If the PCs pass through the gate into the Braineaters' dimension their expedition should probably be the subject of another adventure.
- 4. *Stores*: Contains a variety of tinned foodstuffs, spare parts, tools and jerry cans of fuel for the generators.
- 5. *Kitchen*: Basic cooking facilities
- 6. *Corridor*: Similar in appearance to the corridor at (2) it leads to a concealed entry/exit in the main sewer beneath Stalinallee.
- 7. *Scientist/Technician Accommodation*: Partitioned into half a dozen cramped cubicles there is nothing to be found here except broken furniture: Chairs, desks, tables and beds.

- 8. *SS Troop Accommodation*: Resembles a barracks room with ten beds laid out in two rows.
- 9. *Concealed Exit/Entrance*: A closed (but not locked) door. The outer side has a skin of false brick work enabling the door to blend in with the surrounding sewer wall.



successful they can be considered to have completed their mission. If they fail then the whole party will probably be at crisis point with death the most likely outcome for all.

The PCs may also suffer a mishap while exploring the bunker e.g. tripping on rubble or suffering a masonry fall. This can take place before or after confronting the Braineaters, or it may prove to be the trigger for the creatures' attack as they take advantage of the PCs' attention being elsewhere.

OPTIONAL EXTRA

Odinokov and his men beat the PCs to the bunker but are ambushed and killed by the Braineaters. When the PCs locate the bunker they find the Braineaters armed with the GK-11 team's weapons and more than ready to use them.

SCENE VIII — THE END

LOCATION DESCRIPTION

Probably the bunker as above, but other venues are possible e.g. the street, the PCs vehicle or the RPA base at the Kammergericht.

WHAT HAPPENS

The PCs have defeated the Braineaters. Arrangements need to be made for the disposal of the alien cadavers and final destruction of the bunker's gate machine. The PCs may deal with these issues themselves or call RPA HQ for the necessary assistance. This is also an appropriate time for any national or personal agendas to come into play, especially for PCs who work for one of the organisations that have infiltrated the RPA. In such cases a conflict between the PCs would seem likely.

SOURCES/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Braineater by Nigel Findley from **Dark Races**, GDW's "Monster Manual" style **Dark Conspiracy** supplement.

The Battle of Berlin 1945 by Tony Le Tissier.

The 73rd Rifle Regiment is a fictional unit, borrowed from *Eastern Front Tankleader*, a platoon/company level war game published by **West End Games** (1987).

Most German NPC names were appropriated from the cast list of the film *Duped Until Doomsday* (E.Germany 1957) while Russian NPC names come from *All's Fair In Love and War* (USSR 1968). I

got the idea from the *Lazy Man's Guide to Constructing a CoC or Horror adventure* by **Call of Cthulhu** designer Sandy Petersen. The guide itself can be found here:

http://strolen.com/viewing/Lazys_man_guide_to_constructing_a_CoC_or_Horror_adventure

The Charite Hospital

<http://www.charite.de/ch/neuro/lokales/charite/geschichte.html>

http://www.charite.de/en/charite/locations/campus_charite_mitte_ccm/

http://www.charite-research.org/aboutus_charite_history.html

The Berlin Black Market <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/fall/berlin-black-market-1.html>

Once again my thanks to Zvezda (our man in Berlin) for reviewing the first draft and making numerous helpful suggestions and corrections. Any errors that remain are of course entirely down to me.

NPCS

KURT BORFELDT/WILLI BUCKNER

Statistics: as per Volkspolizei officer (see p75). Buckner should have the additional trait of (-) A bit green

Hidden Agenda: Use their position as police officers to enrich themselves, without getting caught.

[As Beat Cop NPC, but Buckner is Green rather than Veteran.

Motivation: 8♦, 5♣]

Equipment: Walther P38 pistol, police car, Opel truck, Stg 44 assault rifle



HELGA RAUMER

Attributes

Action: 2
Influence: 3
Reason: 3

Traits

- (+) Attractive
- (+) Adept at bargaining and negotiation
- (-) Vengeful
- (-) Criminally inclined

Hidden Agenda: Continue with her black market activities while staying out of jail, exact retribution on those who murdered Kieling.

[Experienced NPC with the following skills: Act/Bluff 6, Bargain 8, Business 6,

Persuasion 6, and Streetwise 7

Motivation: 7♦, 5♥]



DR PHILIP ULRICH

Attributes

Action: 2
Influence: 2
Reason: 4

Traits

- (+) Professionally Competent
- (-) Easily Intimidated by Officialdom

Hidden Agenda: To keep his job at the hospital and not get into trouble with the Soviet or East German authorities.

[Experienced NPC with the following skills: Biology 6, Chemistry 6, and Medical 8

Motivation: J♦, 5♥]



NPCS

FORMER SS-HAUPTSTURMFUHRER OTTO HARZER

Attributes

Action: 3
Influence: 3
Reason: 3

Traits

- (+) Pleasant and urbane manner
- (+) Proficient with pistol
- (-) War criminal

Hidden Agenda: Avoid prosecution for war crimes committed while serving with the Das Reich Division.

[Statistics as Government Agent]

Motivation: 4♥, Q♠

Equipment: Walther P38 pistol



CAPTAIN FYODOR ODINOKOV

Attributes

Action: 4
Influence: 3
Reason: 3

Traits

- (+) Single minded and Ruthless
- (+) Proficient with all types of small arm
- (+) Used to being obeyed
- (-) Paranoid

Hidden Agenda: Successfully complete all assignments given to him by GK-11 so that he can attain promotion within the organisation.

[Statistics as Government Agent]

Motivation: 4♣, Q♠

Equipment: M1933 Tokarev pistol, AK-47 assault rifle (or MP40 SMG), GAZ-67 jeep



GK-11 TROOPS

Attributes

Action: 3
Influence: 2
Reason: 2

Traits

- (+) Proficient with all types of small arm
- (+) Intimidating Appearance
- (-) Blind obedience to orders

Hidden Agenda: Work together to ensure success of current assignment

[Statistics as Veteran NPC]

Motivation: 6♣, Q♠

Equipment: As Captain Odinokov



BRAINEATERS

Attributes

Action: 5
Influence: 3
Reason: 2

Traits

- (+) Double jointed and highly dexterous
- (+) Superb Close Combat Abilities
- (+) Adept at laying ambushes
- (+) Telepathic communication with other members of its species (max range 100m)
- (+) Can absorb the skills of its victims if it consumes their brain matter
- (-) Skill absorption has only limited duration
- (-) Prefers to be active in conditions of darkness

Description: Braineaters are roughly humanoid in appearance but around two metres tall in height. Their skin is grey in colour and bony spines protrude from their body at various points. Their heads are almost insectoid in appearance being bulbous with large yellow eyes and prominent mandibles.

The Braineaters that survived Operation Strangle have kept a low profile, only occasionally indulging their taste for human brains and even then being wary about whom they prey on and taking care to dispose of the bodies afterwards (usually in the sewer system). For the creature who attacked Kieling the black marketer must have seemed like an ideal prospect: Alone and completely out of public view. Of course the Braineater had no way of knowing that Borfeldt and Buckner would shortly arrive on the scene.

Natural Weapons/Abilities: Each Braineater has 8cm long spines growing from the wrist which the creature can use like a knife to stab opponents.

Special Abilities: Skill absorption with maximum level determined by the Braineater's own controlling attributes. Skills acquired in this way fade after four days at the rate of one point per day.

For further details see "*Dark Races*" pages 14-15]

The Braineaters are equal in number to the size of the RPA team.

Strength:	11	Education:	3	Move:	2/8/15/30
Constitution:	7	Charisma:	5	Skill/Damage:	9/2D6
Agility:	11	Empathy:	3	Hits:	12/25
Intelligence:	4	Initiative:	4	#Appear:	1D6+3

DARK CONSPIRACY STATS



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Dark Conspiracy in a Cold City

Cross System Guidance of a Darkly
Cold Nature
By Linden Dunham

With its milieu of monsters, warped technology and corrupt organisations *Cold City*® shares some key themes with *Dark Conspiracy*®, although the games are quite different in terms of mechanics. *Cold City* has a minimal set of rules that emphasises story telling while *Dark Conspiracy* exhibits a more technical approach that clearly shows its lineage from *Twilight 2000*®, an RPG developed by GDW, a firm renowned for its wargames. In *Dark Conspiracy* being properly tooled up can mean the difference between life and death. In *Cold City* it's largely irrelevant. Whether your colleagues back you up, or betray you, is far more important than if you're armed with a pistol, rifle or sub-machine gun. The *Cold City* rule system is a genuinely elegant expression of a particular gaming philosophy but won't be to everyone's taste, e.g. those who prefer to play out combat scenes, or like to role play character interaction and motivation without mechanics, or those who don't like the idea of PC attributes being drastically altered in-game by successful skill rolls. The following notes are intended to be of assistance to those who would like to run a *Cold City* game using *Dark Conspiracy*'s more traditional RPG mechanics. I've also included some suggestions for combining the background of the two games.

SETTING

Campaigns can be set in the milieu of *Dark Conspiracy*, or that of *Cold City/Hot War*®. In the former the activities of the Reserve Police Agency (RPA) are assumed to take place in the same time line as *Dark Conspiracy* but at an earlier point, i.e. the post-war period. The Roswell incident of 1947 has led to contact between the US government and extraterrestrials. Three years on, the relationship remains at a tentative stage. The ETs wish their existence to be kept secret from the public and are keeping a low profile. They are rarely encountered on Earth and—barring any more accidents—even then only when engaged in contact with high level US military/government circles.

The threat to the Earth in the 1950s derives not from ET activity but from corrupted human scientific endeavour: Dangerous technologies (twisted technology) developed by the Nazis have been seized by the victorious allies (most notably the USSR) for use in the evolving Cold War. In addition many creatures created or released during World War 2 continue to haunt the places where they were given life or summoned into the world. Berlin remains a focus for these monstrosities, but others may be found in the vicinity of



former Nazi research sites scattered around Europe. Some may have been released due to ham fisted attempts by Allied scientists to reproduce the work of their Axis counterparts.

ETs do not exist in the **Cold City/Hot War** time line. The Roswell Incident is the result of anything from a malfunctioning weather balloon to the crash of a high tech German aircraft design being tested by the US air force. The horrors that humanity has to contend with are man-made and/or extra-dimensional than extra-terrestrial.

Regardless of how successful the RPA is, it can only win a breathing space for humanity: in the **Dark Conspiracy** time line the ETs will accidentally open the gate on Io in 1983, releasing an alien consciousness whose malevolence far exceeds anything created or summoned by the Nazis. In the **Cold City/Hot War** milieu, the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 escalates into World War 3: the Earth is devastated by nuclear weap-

ons and by the superpowers' use of twisted technology stolen from the Third Reich. Monsters arise from the ruins to prey on the survivors and vast tracts of land become uninhabitable demongrounds. Either way, the PC's exploits with the RPA are largely in vain. Of course there is always the mitigation that if the PCs don't act the upcoming apocalypse will be more terrible: the Great Dark One released in 1983 opens numerous gates to other proto-dimensions releasing even more horrors on this reality. If the Great Dark One and its minions were to gain access to human built gates in places like Porton Down, Camp Hero or Krasnayorsk-14 the situation would be utterly catastrophic. Similarly in 1962 the horrors released by World War 3 could have completely destroyed the planet without the RPA's mission to contain the spread of twisted technology.

TWISTED TECHNOLOGY

This equates to **Dark Conspiracy's** Dark-Tek. For the most part it will be of human construction and have a jury rigged look: bundles of wires, thick power cables and instrument panels with large paddle controls and prominent gauges. The organic style detailed in the **Dark Conspiracy** rulebook will be much less prevalent. Nazi sci-

entists have dabbled with bio-tech, but not to the extent practised by the Darklings.

Nazi scientists at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in the south west Berlin suburb of Dahlem developed a viable theory of trans-dimensional physics, presaging the work of Doctors Tover, Sonada, and Donnov in the 21st Century. They created working dimensional gates which they used to bring various proto-dimension dwelling entities to Earth. The Soviets seized the gate creation equipment at Dahlem (i.e. the dimensional anchors, power sources and associated instrumentation) and removed it to Krasnayorsk-14 for further study. The Western Allies have acquired similar artefacts from sites raided during Operation Strangle and these have been removed to the facilities described in pages 112 - 118 of the **Cold City** rulebook.

MONSTERS

Cold City divides monsters into three broad types: Incursors, Alternatives and The Dead.

Incursors are Darklings and Beasties originally drawn to Earth through Nazi constructed gates. Attempts were made to enlist them into the German war effort, but without much success. Most Incursors were too uncontrollable, and/or just too



alien, to be deployed effectively in battle. Given the extra-dimensional origin of most Darklings the majority of ***Dark Conspiracy*** monsters can be classified as Incursors. The more bestial of these (e.g. Braineaters, Ogres and Wendigo) are interested in little beyond treating humanity as a food source. Their killings, although horrifying, tend to be highly visible making them relatively easy to hunt down. Humanoid creatures (Dark Elves, Bloodkin Vampires, Dread Sidhe, The Pale, some Daemons) are more sophisticated, establishing themselves in human society as a cover for their nefarious activities. The more powerful of these Darklings seek to attain positions of influence within human power structures. The Nazi, and subsequently Allied, hierarchies have been infiltrated by these higher functioning Incursors. Firmly ensconced within the armed forces, intelligence agencies, scientific establishment or civilian administrations they are able to amass great personal power which they exercise for their own gratification, usually to the detriment of humanity. Some of the Allied powers' enthusiasm for unlocking the secrets of twisted technology can be attributed to the influence of these creatures. They want to bring more of their kind through into this dimension as well as causing as much misery as they can.



NAZI ANTI-MATTER DRIVE

Other Incursors remain completely enigmatic. Their behaviour is perceived as malicious because it often has such dire consequences, yet at the same time it is difficult to detect any sign of conscious intent on their part. The sheer alien nature of such creatures makes divining their motives extremely difficult. The Electrogeist, Entropic Gremlin, and Hellfire fit into this category, as do most of the “ghost” type Darklings.

Incusors continue to haunt Berlin with many of them seemingly drawn to Dahlem. They sometimes materialise in the vicinity of the Institute before stealing away into

the city or surrounding countryside to wreak havoc. There is speculation within the RPA that some Incursors do not need gates to effect trans-dimensional travel. Another school of thought suggests that the gates constructed at Dahlem have an existence quite separate from the physical artefacts taken away by the Soviets.

In addition to the extra-dimensional Incursors, Nazi experiments also released two other breeds of horror: The Dead and the Alternatives. The former, also referred to as *Spezialeinsatztruppen*, are the reanimated corpses of soldiers that were deployed on the Eastern Front in the



closing stages of the war. They are electrically animated and thus don't strictly conform to any of the three zombie types detailed in the **Dark Conspiracy** rulebook. They seem to have most in common with Animator zombies though, and I'd suggest using Animator statistics for typical Spezialeinsatztruppen. Quicker and more intelligent specimens can be represented by Yellow Zombie stats.

Alternatives are people, or sometimes animals, that have been altered by experimentation. Typical examples from **Dark Conspiracy** would be the Cerberoids, Medusa, Marterkind (a monster that owes its very existence to Adolf Hitler), and Moreau Weres. The definition of Alternative could even be stretched to include plants thus allowing the Triffid-like Spongies to be a product of warped genetic engineering*.

CHARACTER GENERATION

Most of the careers listed in **Dark Conspiracy** are generic enough for character generation to proceed as set out in the rulebook. Some careers and skills may seem anachronistic but can be accommodated in a 1950s setting with some minor tweaking e.g. The Computer Operation skill will be inappropriate for the major-

ity of characters but might be acquired by a PC who spent the war at Bletchley Park working with Alan Turing and company. In such a case a term as a Computer Operator/Programmer would cover time spent working on captured Enigma Machines and operating "The Bombe" decoder. Likewise a Prole can be considered an urban slum dweller, possibly a refugee or person displaced by bombing, while a Ganger can be a stateless forced labourer turned to crime, or one of the allegedly delinquent youths (sometimes ex-Wehrmacht, Hitler Jugend or Volksturm members) that were cause for concern in many areas of Germany in the immediate aftermath of the war. Exotic careers like Cyborg Escapee or Psychic Test Subject are more problematical but they can still be fitted into a post war setting: The most obvious rationale is that the PC was experimented on in one of the programmes that created the Alternatives. Another possibility is that the PC was a participant, willing or otherwise, in a project set up by the Allies after their acquisition of twisted technology. However, given that one of the RPA's primary missions is to hunt down, kill or incarcerate Alternatives the presence of such individuals in its ranks is unlikely to be welcomed. Empaths may be able to blend in and conceal their true nature,

but cyborgs with their obviously different physiology will stand out. If the GM rules that a cyborg/alternative character can be accepted into service with the RPA then their modifications should not be so apparent that they are likely to cause alarm to the general public. Artificial eyes hidden behind sunglasses are acceptable. A chunky Robocop style mechanical arm probably isn't. There should also be a cost for cyborg characters in terms of distrust from their superiors and colleagues. They may also be targets for abduction and study by the likes of GK-11 or BERB.

For most PCs at least one term in a military career will be appropriate, reflecting their war service and/or their most likely route into the RPA. **Dark Conspiracy** only contains details of US military careers but they're generalised enough to allow their use for personnel of other nations. Those with access to **Twilight 2000** can consult the Other Armed Forces listings for non-US PCs. In each case a certain amount of caution needs to be exercised before taking the information given as gospel, bearing in mind that it pertains to 1980s era military formations. The GM and player should perhaps aim for a character that feels right for the era rather than being accurate in all particulars.

*As an interesting aside, John Wyndham suggests that real life Soviet agronomist Trofim Lysenko may have been responsible for the creation of the Triffids, while remaining vague about their exact origins. The potential for them to be the result of twisted technology taken from Nazi Germany is readily apparent.



TRUST AND HIDDEN AGENDAS

These play a major part in *Cold City*, to the extent that they can be used to bring extra dice to a die pool and thus increase the chances for success in any conflict.

Dark Conspiracy doesn't have a comparable mechanic, meaning that these factors will have to be role played. Trust, or lack of it, will be the result of the PCs' personalities and how they behave towards each other. Agendas will be a matter of individual choice and/or influence by national organisations. A PC who has spent time with the likes of the GRU or CIA can expect their previous employer to be in touch (probably via a Contact - see the *Dark Conspiracy* rulebook, pages 19-22) shortly after their posting to the RPA, that's if the agency didn't engineer the assignment in the first place. After all, as Vladimir Putin once observed "there's no such thing as an ex-Chekest." The agency will require the PC's assistance in furthering its own agenda. Their instructions may well be at odds with orders given by RPA, leaving the PC with the tricky choice of coming into conflict with their colleagues, or displeasing their parent agency. With other PCs having their own agendas it shouldn't be difficult to foster the requisite atmosphere of unease and paranoia. Rewarding the fulfilment of agendas can be done via the



POST-WAR PERSHING'S PRETENTIOUS PARADE

experience point system detailed in the *Dark Conspiracy* rulebook.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

Colder City: Frozen corpses are being dumped all over central Berlin. Many of the dead have been missing for some time. Others remain unidentified. Rumours are circulating that someone is continuing the Nazis' cruel hypothermia experiments, possibly the Soviets or a lone mad scientist. As the PCs investigate they discover that some of the dead people were seen in bars,

clubs and other public places talking with a tall, fair haired man (or woman) before they disappeared.

A colony of Pale has established itself in central Berlin and is preying on the local population. They have taken up residence in the crypt of a bombed out church. They take their victims here as well keeping them in a semi-frozen comatose state for a few days before finally leaching away all of their body heat. If the PCs stake out local bars, taverns and night clubs they will eventually encounter one of the Pale and

be able to track him back to the creatures' lair. Possibly one of the PCs may want to volunteer themselves as bait...

Children of the Grave: There have been a number of kidnappings in the region of Treptower Park, south east of the city centre. The victims are from a variety of backgrounds and have nothing in common other than being out after dark. A witness claims that he was accosted by several shambling figures dressed in rags and stinking of rotting flesh but managed to escape by outrunning them. It appears that a contingent of Spezialeinsatztruppen are active in the area and the RPA are assigned to deal with the matter.

If the PCs visit the park at night they encounter a group of what appears to be Spezialeinsatztruppen zombies. However, these creatures are dressed in the remains of Red Army uniforms, lack cranial electrodes and release a foul smelling gas cloud if shot or stabbed. They are plainly not Spezialeinsatztruppen.

A Bhuta has taken up residence underneath the Soviet War Cemetery located on the west side of the park. The Bhuta is animating the interred bodies as Darbas and sending them out to find living people for it to consume. All of the missing persons have been assimilated by the Bhuta. If

the PCs penetrate the Bhuta's subterranean complex they will have to battle against hordes of Darbas before confronting the Bhuta itself. They may wish to get back up from the RPA, but even if help is available rooting the Bhuta out of its lair will be a grim and dangerous task.

Wheels of Terror: US Army units are reporting that several of their vehicles seem to have developed minds of their own. There have been incidents of jeeps, half-tracks and tanks failing to respond to controls and/or travelling short distances as if under direction by someone other than the driver. In addition the vehicles have suffered damage – broken axles, thrown tracks, severely rusted bodywork – that is unrelated to the loss of control and goes far beyond normal wear and tear. There is speculation that some kind of twisted technology device is being used on the vehicles, although nobody is able to suggest a credible culprit or motivation.

An Entropic Gremlin has taken up residence at a US Army depot and is feeding off the various vehicles kept there. For the most part it is content just to drain the energy from whichever vehicle it is presently occupying. Occasionally it feels the need to assert control over its host though, much to the alarm of those who may be

in the vehicle at the time. Ultimately the Gremlin decides to move on, particularly if it feels that the PCs are close to discovering it. Imagine it taking control of an M26 Pershing tank as it crashes its way out of the depot and heads east across Berlin, towards the Soviet sector. Can the PCs stop it before it reaches the Russians and causes a major incident, worsening the already fractious relationship between the occupying powers?

FURTHER REFERENCE

The following may be of use in running a *Cold City* style **Dark Conspiracy** campaign:

Infantry Weapons of the World by Loren K Wiseman. **Twilight 2000** small arms guide. Contains statistics for numerous *Cold City* era firearms.

Paul Mulcahy's exhaustive **Twilight 2000** site at: <http://www.pmulcahy.com/>

Useful for those who don't have access to *Infantry Weapons of the World*. Contains statistics for era-specific firearms and also some post war vehicles. Note that ratings may differ from official GDW stats.

Germany 1945: From War to Peace by Richard Bessel. A well researched account of Germany's "Year Zero", with plenty of information on its effects on ordinary people. Good inspiration for converting **Dark Conspiracy** careers into 1950s equivalents.

ALSO, CHECK OUT PHILLIP KERR'S BERNIE GUNTHER!



The GUN

Gunpowder Stained Fiction
By Bradley K. McDevitt

The gun felt heavy in his hands, cold and heavy. It was a small one, maybe a .22 caliber, but to Rick, it felt like it weighed the world. Almost as heavy as the baseball bat. In his dreams, when he dreamt at all, Rick could still feel the weight of the baseball bat, and how the old woman's face felt as it was crushed inward.

He shook himself, looked around at the apartment he was hiding in. There was not much to look at; the building had been condemned years before, and had never gotten torn down for reasons Rick neither knew nor cared about. It had quickly become a refuge for drunks, junkies, and any number of homeless. And at least one murderer, Rick mentally added to the checklist.

The gun felt heavy in his hands, cold and heavy.

Only three years ago, he remembered, he had been ready to take his place among the members of the most feared gang in LeCroix, the 107th Aryan Overlords. He had done his apprenticeship, as it was called, running drugs here and there for the boss. He had survived the beatdown, with only a couple of teeth loosened and a fractured rib.

He had been ready to take his place among the members. Just one last job, they said, to make sure he was as ruthless as would be needed. They had randomly picked out a local woman for him to brutalize, just to test his mettle.

When he saw who it was, he almost balked. Not Mrs. Petrowski; he had known her for years as a child, dutifully delivering her the LeCroix News Spectator every day for four years.

But there was no backing out.

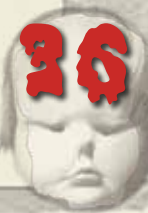
She had recognized him when he buzzed her door, of course; it had only been a few years since he had quit the route and started running with the Overlords. To this day, Rick could not remember what he had said to her to get her to let him into her little apartment. The apartment smelled exactly the way he remembered, that odd smell that he always associated with old people.

It didn't matter; by the time he was done, the smell of blood overrode everything, and he was a full-fledged member of the Overlords.

The gun felt heavy in his hands, cold and heavy, and Rick now felt no comfort in that membership.

Six months later, the guys in the somber suits had appeared at his doorstep. His first thought was that they were undercover cops; that was until the one had pulled a wand out, and waved it in his face. Rick had time to start making a joke about Merlin before a thousand invisible fists hit him, taking him down into blackness.

When he had come to, stripped to the skin except for his underwear, the guys had calmly explained that they knew all about Mrs. Petrowski, knew all about the drive-by on LaPierre Avenue and 89th. Knew



all about the drug deals, the gang rapes... everything, even shit Rick had forgotten or been too high to remember until now.

He had to pay back for those crimes, the guys explained, and they were there to ensure he was going to do it. The world, they explained, was full of evil people and evil things that needed killing. He had been chosen to be the killer.

Rick had told them to go fuck themselves, and they did not even bother laughing. Then the one did something weird. He came up to Rick and placed his hand on Rick's stomach, intoning some words that Rick had to guess was French or Italian, but Rick did not have time to think about it because the pain had hit, pain so big he passed out before he could even scream.

The Stain, the guys were explaining when he returned to consciousness, was alive, would grow, and would eventually kill him. Unless he sought out a source of evil every month by the first night of the new moon, and destroyed it. It cannot be removed in any way, they went on to explain in their soft voices. Feel free to try, they even added, chuckling. Then they had waved that wand again, and the thousand fists had returned him to the blackness.

That had happened two years ago. He had tried getting it removed, only to find that only he and a few others could actually see it. And it had grown, until he gave in and did as they had commanded. It did not take long, lurking on 121st, to stumble

on the mugger roughing up that prostitute, and he had not felt a whit of conscience when he stabbed the guy in the neck.

The next day, the News Spectator carried the news that the mugger had been wanted for several child murders. And at the next new moon, the Stain only grew a tiny fraction of how it had grown in previous months. For the next several months, he had repeated that pattern, and sometimes the Stain grew only a little, sometimes a bit. Once, after he had taken the woman he "rescued" back to her family on a random whim of kindness, and the Stain seemed to have actually shrunk.

The News Spectator made comment that a serial killer seemed on the loose in the slums of the city, but given the criminal records of the victims, no one was getting too concerned.

Rick was feeling confident that he was going to be able to keep the Stain under control. That was, until he stabbed the one mugger, and the guy ignored it, then almost ripped out Rick's throat with teeth that had suddenly grown as long as a knife sticking futilely out of his chest.

The gun felt heavy in his hands, cold and heavy.

Rick had not been able to kill that particular evil, and the Stain had grown noticeably next time. In the past sixteen months, Rick mused, the Stain had kept growing. He had eventually managed to track down the long-toothed mugger and killed it, as

he had the other things that had seemed to lurk in the darker shadows of LeCroix's streets and alleys.

And the Stain had sometimes almost stopped growing, only to resume its encroachment every time he was not able to find anyone or anything that needed killing. Now, its darkness had consumed his flesh all across his chest, and down a good portion of both arms and both legs.

The men who had cursed him had gotten their money's worth, he mused. Even when he was not dreaming of Mrs. Petrowski, his nights were far too full of memories of things he had not thought existed outside of monster movies.

The gun felt heavy in his hands, cold and heavy.

He knew what he needed to do. Someone else, he was sure, would be cursed to carry on his work; Rick wondered what they would have done to deserve the Stain.

Eying the gun in his hand, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Petrowski, but this has been the best I could do. Only one last evil that I can take care of."





IN THEORY THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE, BUT IN PRACTICE THERE IS.

--YOGI BERRA

THE CASE FOR CASELESS AMMUNITION

A defense for caseless ammo in RPGs
By Kevin O'Neill
For any modern/near future
RPG

In the past, various people stated that we were unlikely to ever see caseless ammunition for small arms in the real world so it's unlikely for it to appear in RPGs. Because of this, some people went further and said caseless ammunition in RPGs was not realistic.

*To be brutally to the point,
they were wrong.*

In this article I'll attempt to show why.

The most often cited reason that we don't see caseless ammunition in use, was cost. More specifically, that it would be too expensive to change from the cased ammunition already in use to some new caseless type and scrap the older rifle designs for a new design that could fire the new ammunition.

The problem with that line of reasoning is that if it was simply a matter of the cost of changing from one to another, we would probably never change. The British would not have changed from the .303 round to the 7.62mm NATO round and then to the 5.56mm NATO round. The Russians would not have changed from the 7.62x54mmR round to the 7.62x39mm round to the 5.45mm round. The USA would not have

changed from the .30-06 round to 7.62mm NATO to the 5.56mm M193 round to the 5.56mm NATO (SS109) round and so on ad infinitum. It should also be remembered too, that the changes to rifles and ammunition in all three of the examples listed above occurred in the space of less than 40 years.

In these sorts of circumstances, national interest and defence goals go much further to determine if a system will be adopted than the cost of the update does.



STANDARD Mk VII .303 INCH CARTRIDGE



HK 4.73 X 33MM CASELESS CARTRIDGE



HK G-11 BATTLE RIFLE

So after the promising Heckler und Koch (HK) G11 rifle and its 4.73x33mm caseless ammunition were hailed as the next infantry rifle for West German, why was it dropped from their military procurement?

Two reasons specifically played their part in reducing the need to adopt the G11. The loss of the contract for the supply of the G11 left HK financially devastated, severely limiting their ability to market the rifle to another nation. However another, quite significant, potential reason also exists that will be explored later. It's worth noting that HK were so certain of the adoption of the G11 that they also developed at their own expense, a light machinegun using the same 4.73x33mm ammunition but a different operating system to allow sustained firing and also a pistol using 4.73x25mm caseless. Both the machinegun, known generally as the LMG11 and the pistol, referred to as the

G11 PDW, can be found under the Rare Prototypes section on the HK Pro website at reference [1].

To be fair to those earlier writers who said we won't see caseless ammunition, since about 2005 more information has become available on why West Germany dropped their plans to adopt the rifle. The primary reason, as we now know, was that the end of the Cold War meant that the need for the G11 rifle no longer existed. West Germany no longer had to worry about being outnumbered by the forces of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Treaty partners so they didn't need a rifle to allow one West German soldier to face off against 10 Soviet soldiers. As a sideline, there's also a little more recognition now about Mauser's G11 project and although some information at Probert Encyclopaedia is not entirely correct, the fact that some information is available shows that the concept was not being worked on in isolation just by HK. (Specifically, the Probert listing states that the Mauser G11 became the HK G11 when in fact, the two rifles were actually being developed at the same time.) The Mauser G11 project was also listed on page 229 of *Jane's Infantry Weapons 1978* where it is listed as the 4.75mm Mauser Trials Rifle. See the Probert Encyclopedia at reference [2].

The second reason is directly related to the first, West and East Germany amalgamated and West Germany bore much of the cost. Without a national imperative for a new infantry rifle, the money for such a project could be diverted to the unifying of the two Germanys and it was. So while it was no longer needed, the G11 and its caseless ammunition were considered important enough by the German government that they were put on the shelf but not forgotten. They would surface again for the US Army's Advanced Combat Rifle trials in August 1989 and although neither the HK rifle or its ammunition would be adopted by the US Army, nor were any of the other contenders.

Although the military may not have wanted it at that time, that wasn't the end of caseless ammunition however. The Austrian Voere company produced a hunting rifle chambered in two different caseless rounds, the 5.7mm UCC and the 6mm UCC. It sold in modest numbers in the USA and is still featured on the Voere website.

Details on the rifle can be found at reference [3].

It's also now known that the US military is looking at new weapon technologies for the near future, one of which involves



non-traditional ammunition types. It's interesting to note that the wiki article for the Lightweight Small Arms Technologies, or LSAT (reference [4]), mentions that the High Ignition Temperature Propellant used for the G11's ammunition is considered to be an existing and proven technology. This addresses another reason cited as a block to the adoption of caseless ammunition, the potential for cookoffs after a period of sustained firing.

The most common propellant used for ammunition is nitrocellulose which has an ignition temperature of approximately 170°C.

Without the cartridge case to shield the nitrocellulose from the heat building up in the rifle chamber due to sustained firing, it's quite possible for the propellant to ignite and cause the round to fire without any participation by the user. Dynamit Nobel, who worked on developing the ammunition for HK's G11 candidate, solved most of the concerns in this regard by using a desensitized high explosive to provide the solid propellant (nitrocellulose is a 'low' explosive). The round is also lacquered to prevent moisture from damaging the propellant and also to protect it from minor handling damage.

See reference [4] for images. Reference [5] features images of the two non-traditional ammunition types being examined by the US Army. It can be seen from the images that the alternate ammunition types are a radical departure from current types.

The third reason hinted at above for the non-adoption of the G11 is the least recognized and the least heard of in mainstream sources. It is however entirely understandable given that the time between the end of World War 2 and the development of the G11 was less than 45 years and some of the people who had lived through that war were now in positions in their respective governments or other national organizations. In a conversation I had with a Norwegian forumite in 2008 on the ***Dark Conspiracy the RPG*** site, he mentioned that he had spoken at length about the G11 with an HK representative at a local gun show in Norway. The rep apparently stated that for some countries, it was not considered appropriate for a reunited Germany to start fielding a new wonder weapon (a potential echo of Nazi Germany's Wunderwaffe). Many people beheld the unification of the two Germanys with trepidation, the notion that Germany was also developing breakthrough weapons technology would have been even more worrying for them and the German government

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world.guns.ru/machine/mg97-e.htm



G11 IN DARK CONSPIRACY

G11 (Assault Rifle): A weapon of radical design and great effectiveness, the G11 replaced the G3 as the standard assault rifle and the Uzi as the standard submachinegun of the German Army. It is a bullpup-configuration weapon, which means that the action is placed behind the firing hand, in the normally empty stock. This means that bullpup rifles can have a shorter overall length without the necessity for a shorter barrel.

It differs from other combat rifles in that it fires caseless 4.7mm bullets. The compact nature of the weapon and low recoil of its round make it as handy as a submachinegun (even though it is a rifle).

Its caseless ammunition is extremely compact, allowing a large magazine capacity. Since there is no spent cartridge casing to eject, the rifle's action is completely enclosed and thus is very reliable in a dirty environment. However, there is no way to reload the round since it is completely consumed.

Ammo: 4.7mm caseless

Wt: 4.5 kg

Mag: 50 box

Price: \$800 (—/S)

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	-Recoil-			
						SS	Brst	Rng	
G11	3	3	1-Nil	4	50	2	3	55	

Extract from the 1st edition *Dark Conspiracy* rulebook, dated by real events.

would have been remiss not to consider the feelings of their neighbours in this regard.

While caseless ammunition has been in existence, even if not recognized as such, since the 1800s when the Dreyse Needle Gun of 1841 fired paperbound cartridges (these cartridges were an evolution of earlier paper cartridges used in muzzle loading firearms), the needs of the modern assault rifle and machinegun have seen the caseless round mature into a worthy successor to the cased round currently in use. As a note of interest, the Dreyse gun gave German states of the time a significant advantage over their rivals and it's credited with radically changing the military tactics of the 19th century. In this regard it could be seen as something of a spiritual predecessor to the G11.

The advantages of modern caseless rounds are significant, specifically the non-requirement for metals for the case gives a substantial reduction in weight for the infantryman. Other advantages include the lack of empty cases left at a battle site that could help provide information to the enemy and the reduction of metals needed to provide materiel to the military. The disadvantages of the case no longer being usable as a heatsink still remain but an appropriate

rifle design can go a long way to mitigating that problem.

The US Army recognizes that future programs to increase the effectiveness of its soldiers will most probably lead to a significant increase in the weight of gear carried. To mitigate some of this issue, they are currently exploring various weapons technologies to reduce the load that the rifle and its ammunition contribute. Plastic-cased and caseless ammunition are two ways that weight reduction can be accomplished. The weight reduction by itself has been enough reason to prompt the USA to investigate and trial caseless ammunition with a serious intent to introduce a series of infantry weapons firing non-traditional ammunition before the year 2020.

The reasons for including caseless ammunition into a modern or near future RPG do exist and it's entirely possible that soldiers of the US Army may field caseless small arms within the next ten years.

What all this means is that the GM of any modern game should not be worried that caseless ammunition (and even plastic cased ammunition or other such 'exotics') is not appropriate for their modern or near future setting. In fact, it may be entirely appropriate.



Last Call

I was tending bar at the *Pint and a Half* the day the world came to an end.

The bar was opened in 1957 by Ian and Michael Culhain, just six months after they stepped off the boat from Ireland. Their idea was to operate an authentic Irish pub in the heartland of the U.S.A. The building wasn't hard to find, as St. Louis was a little depressed at the time. Businesses moving out, people moving out, properties being condemned. Ian and his diminutive brother stepped into a city and a time that were ripe for just such an enterprise.

Oh, and the end of world? It came upon us as quietly as a cemetery at midnight.



"So, Red, who do ya have ta fook ta get a drink around here?"

I paused in wiping the bar to stare at Liam O'Leary. In his fifties, white haired and more than 50 pounds overweight, he still had the appearance of a rabble-rouser. His nose virtually glowed with swollen capillaries as he pointed to his empty glass.

"O'Leary, you old fart, you'll have to pay your tab before I get you another drink."

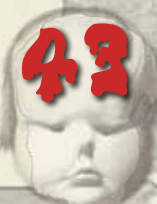
"Ahh, ya great, bloody..." He chuckled as he reached for his wallet. "Who made you the bookkeeper?"

I thumbed over my shoulder at the black & white 8x10 of Ian and Michael standing in front of the bar on opening day, as he knew I would. It showed five foot tall Ian in front of the doorway, with three foot six inch Michael standing atop a keg. They had their arms about each other's shoulders and sported that peculiar expression of mirth and seriousness that it seemed only the Irish can carry off. The brothers had been a merry pair, Ian often carrying Michael on his shoulders at various local events. They did this so much, in fact, that they came to say that together they were "The Tallest Irishman in the States". With Michael long since deceased and Ian in a nursing home, their heirs had left it up to me to run the establishment as I saw fit. That meant tabs had to be paid weekly, even by the regulars like O'Leary.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, the founders o' the feast, I know," he said as he handed over two fifties and went back to watching the television.

I got his change and put two fives in front of his glass and watched as he pointed to the screen.

End-of-the-world-as-we-know-it Fiction
By Dave Schuey



"Who let tha' bugger on the field?" O'Leary cried out as one of the players from Dublin was stripped of the ball by a Manchester United player.

"Well I suppose he has as much right to be there as anyone."

"Bloody English!"

I chuckled and refilled his glass as I heard the outer door to the bar open. Moments later a very touristy-looking couple entered the bar. They both had a bit of a harried look on their faces as they slid into a booth. The man wore a khaki shirt and cargo pants while his wife was looking very suburban in a flowery sun dress. Her neatly styled blonde hair was slightly mussed.

"Afternoon! What can I get you folks?"

"I'll have a vodka and my wife would like a rum and coke, thanks."

I pondered their choice of hard liquor this early in the afternoon only a moment before pouring the man's vodka and mixing his wife's drink quickly. Stepping out from behind the bar with the drinks on a tray I approached the table.

"Here you go. You folks from around here?"

They both took a big gulp of their drinks before the husband answered. "No, we're in town from Kansas City. We've just been... there was a...look, is there any chance we could watch the news?"

I turned to look at O'Leary, who was yelling something at the screen. "Well, it's Dublin versus Manchester United, but..." I looked up at the screen and saw that a large crowd of ragtag fans had taken the field and were assaulting the players. This delay of the game must be what was upsetting O'Leary. "I guess we could change it. It'll take a bit for them to clean up the riot."

I walked over to the bar and put a hand on O'Leary's shoulder. "How 'bout we watch a little news while they clear that mess up?"

"Bahh, do what ya want. Dublin's blown it."

"Good man." I walked around the bar and picked up the remote, switching to CNN. "That okay?"

"What the hell is tha'?" O'Leary exclaimed.

I turned and saw that CNN was displaying footage from a mass grave robbing in Thailand. Apparently the residents of the

small village had awakened that morning to find the local graveyard devoid of bodies. Officials had, as yet, been unable to determine how such a massive crime had been accomplished in one night.

"Sick bastards! No respect for the dead, I tell ya' ." O'Leary began to rail at the screen but was stopped short when the commentator continued to describe similar grave robbing incidents in cities worldwide.

The couple cast worried glances at each other. "How about a local station?"

"It's just going to be soap operas and talk shows this time of the day. Midday news was at noon."

"I think they may be reporting something."

Shrugging, I thumbed in the number of one of the local stations and was indeed rewarded with the somewhat strange scene of the midday anchor sitting at her desk, listening intently to something being transmitted through her earpiece. Behind her, production assistants and reporters scurried about, oblivious to the live camera. She turned her attention back to the camera.



"Um...traffic on Highway 70 is at a standstill, as is Highway 270. Police are cordoning off the areas around the cemeteries, and the National Guard has been activated. The incident 45 minutes ago seems to have only been the beginning." She turned to someone off camera. "I can't do this...I need to get to my kids..." Whoever it was she had been speaking to said something unintelligible. She turned back to the camera.

"I repeat, everyone is advised to stay in their homes and places of business and lock their doors. As unbelievable as it may seem, this morning's uprisings are growing in numbers. All around the city there have been incidents. People pulled from their cars, assaulted on the streets. God I have to leave." She got up and removed the earpiece and microphone. She could just barely be heard to ask someone about a helicopter.

I was virtually transfixed, but spared enough attention to look at the couple. The woman was in tears, clinging to her husband for dear life. For his part, he was also staring at the television. Catching my eye, he saw my puzzlement. "They just came up out of the ground. Just where we planted them. Just like seeds. I don't know what they want, but the dead have risen."



O'Leary insisted on leaving. I tried to talk him out of it, but he stubbornly refused to believe the couple or the news stations. The last I saw of him he was trudging in the direction of his home on the eerily deserted St. Louis streets.

I locked and bolted the outer door and said a silent thanks to Ian and Michael for choosing a location with no windows. As dark and gloomy as this had often made the barroom, it now seemed a blessing. Pulling a table into the entryway I upended it against the door for an additional bit of barricade.

"Are there any other exits?" Barry, the husband from Kansas City was genuinely trying to help, but he seemed reluctant to part from Dianne, his wife.

"Just the fire door in back. Its pretty heavy, has no handle on the outside and opens out, but there is a steel bar you can slide into place."

He nodded as Dianne clutched his arm and together they moved back toward the restrooms and the fire door. They had related their tale as O'Leary and I searched the other channels for news.

About half an hour before they walked into the *Pint and a Half* they'd been driving past St. Agatha's Cemetery. Traffic was remarkably backed up, but they couldn't see why. Suddenly a crowd of people began rushing down the sidewalks, through the cars, all around them. They seemed to be hysterical, screaming, and with a look of abject terror on their faces. Several people in the cars around them joined the throng. The man in the car next to Barry shifted into reverse and executed a panicked 180, knocking down several fleeing pedestrians in the process.

Then the couple had seen what the others were running from. Moving toward them at a stumbling gait was a crowd of a different sort. Dirty, decayed, and horrific beyond belief, the former residents of the cemetery were on the move. The ones out front looked recently embalmed, still with a vaguely lifelike pallor, but behind them a cohort of skeletal companions scraped along. Barry admitted to thinking momentarily of Michael Jackson's *Thriller*, but was immediately struck by the reality of the situation.

Although scenes like this had played themselves out many times before on the big and small screens, these corpses were all the more horrifying because he was



here, now, he was not in a movie. He was stunned by the realization. So much so that the walking dead had made it to Barry's car before he snapped out of it. Luckily, Barry and Dianne had locked their doors when they entered the car earlier, and the windows were up. Barry slammed the car into reverse and maneuvered to his rear, scraping several abandoned cars as he went. There was a man being hauled out of his Pinto by two zombies. He was bleeding from wounds on his arms and head, and the leaner of the two undead was attempting to take a bite out of his cheek. Barry didn't think twice before backing into the scene.

He had hoped that the man would escape, but the force of the Cadillac had snapped his back and pinned him against the Pinto. His dead eyes seemed to say a silent "Thank You" to Dianne as her passenger side window scraped past him. She started screaming as Barry wheeled the Caddy around forward and accelerated as fast as it would go. They drove around frantically for several minutes, encountering car wrecks, fires and other scenes of carnage before they decided that they needed to hole up somewhere. That was when they had entered the bar.

"Why didn't you say something when you came in?" I asked. "That's not a story you keep to yourself over a vodka."

Barry just looked sadly at me. "Would you have believed me?"

I had to admit that I would not have. O'Leary chose this moment to declare that he still didn't believe it and that he was going home. No amount of logic or pleading could dissuade him, and he left his two fives on the bar, took his Cardinals cap from the rack beside the door and left.



I stacked another table on the previous one and judged my barricade finished. Moving back to the bar I found that all channels were displaying the Emergency Broadcast test pattern. CNN was scrolling a message that global civil unrest had forced worldwide martial law and that instructions would be forthcoming.

"My ass," I said as the couple returned from the rear.

"It's barred. Seems sturdy enough. Mind if we make a call...its long distance?"

I simply looked at them like they were crazy.

"Yeah...right." Barry replied as he picked up the phone and started to dial. However, he didn't finish. "No dial tone."

As if responding to a silent signal the pounding began. On the front door and on the back door. A low chorus of moaning chimed in from the other side of the wall. I could only imagine what it must sound like at ground zero. Of course, if you were at ground zero you probably wouldn't have to listen to it for very long.

While I considered this a familiar voice could be heard above the din. "Red, let me in. It's a fooking 'orror show out 'ere."

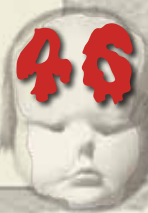
Moving quickly to the inner door I was stopped short by Barry crying out, "NO!"

"I can't leave him out there." I started to pull the first table down. Barry and Dianne both grabbed my arms to restrain me.

"If you open that door we're all dead. Can't you hear them?" Dianne said.

"But I've known that man all my..." O'Leary's screams of agony stopped the argument. When the pounding resumed moments later it seemed even closer. "You shits. I could've saved him."

"He was dead when he walked out that door. Those things aren't reasonable. We've



seen them. If he didn't believe us he was a fool."

I ceased struggling against them and held up my hands. "I won't argue that point, but it was still a cold thing to do." I considered that if this was what surviving meant, throwing your friends to the wolves so that you could live an extra minute, I wasn't sure I wanted to go on.

"Do you think this might be Judgment Day?"

Barry and Dianne looked first at each other and then at me. "I hope not." Barry said.



Each passing hour became more intolerable than the last. It seemed as if the crowd outside was only growing, both in size and volume. Not surprisingly, we all had a number of drinks. At the moment, the alcohol had taken its toll on both Barry and Dianne. They were slumped in a booth, not passed out, but asleep. I actually envied them at this point. I had never been able to sleep while drunk, and I was more than tipsy at the moment.

Then, as quickly as it had begun, the moaning stopped. I listened intently. It was

indeed gone. So was the pounding. I wasn't sure what I heard, but it was definitely not either of those sounds. In fact, it sounded like helicopters. Yes, I thought I could make out helicopters. Even police sirens. We were rescued!

I ran to the door and pulled the first table down. I didn't know how, but we had survived the assault. I pushed the first table aside and pulled the second out. Maybe someone was monitoring the phone line. We had tried to make a call, and it had been picked up. The authorities knew there was someone alive in the bar. "That must be it." I pushed the second table out of the way and turned the deadbolt.

"Gotta get the tourists." I thought and turned back into the bar to wake the couple.

"Hey, get up. We're saved. The cops are outside!"

Barry and Dianne roused from their stupor and blinked, obviously hoping the whole thing had been a dream. When they saw where they were they looked at the door.

"What did you do?"

The sound of the door opening was at first music to my ears. I couldn't understand why the couple would be afraid to be rescued by the cops. Maybe the guy they'd hit with their car. I turned and saw with bleary eyes two figures entering the bar. They weren't cops. In fact they looked very familiar. One was about five feet tall and dressed in what looked to be a hospital gown. The other wore a suit but was considerably shorter, maybe three foot six.

"Ian? Michael? What are you doin' here? I'm closin' tonight." I saw a crowd coming in behind them and realized what was happening. "Is this a private party?"

When the figures got closer my eyesight cleared, as did my mind. The decaying figures were moving slowly toward us with a feverish lust in their dead eyes. In my last moment of clarity I tried to evince some companionship from my former employers.

"Oh. Well, I guess that's last call then."



Hunters Hunted

An Adventure
By Joe "Citizen-X" Klemann
For World of Darkness®

I made the choice to design this adventure for the *World of Darkness*® system specifically because I felt it would work extraordinarily well as a springboard for a *Hunter the Vigil*® chronicle, of which I will go into the most detail, however, I will also list ways to bring the adventure to bear in any other type of *World of Darkness* setting, including *Mage the Awakening*®, *Werewolf the Forsaken*®, and *Vampire the Requiem*®.

INTRODUCTION

People often go missing in Alaska, wandering off in the wilds to die, but a disturbing trend is forming surrounding Mary and Cat Islands. Both islands have been part of a recent energy harvesting and research project headed up by the international GloboChem Corporation, a petroleum company which has purchased the rights to exploit the islands from the Alaskan government. In Ketchikan, the closest city to the islands and where GloboChem hires locals for its facility, unrest builds as the disappearances mount and become more frequent. Dire rumors from environmental groups and the Indian Tribal Council suggest that GloboChem is irresponsible in its operations and even suggest that it may be killing its own workers. Some native

people recall the legend of the Keet Ku, the "Killer Flood Tide" and demons who steal away children in the night. Perhaps there is some truth to the legends? The players are brought in to investigate the missing persons and get to the bottom of disappearances that have been ignored by local law enforcement. The mystery itself, however, is not the only problem and all of Alaska could soon be in danger from an ancient enemy of humanity, will the hunters be hunted?

THE TRUTH

What's really going on in the wilds of Alaska? Since the time of the dinosaurs, a species of bipedal reptiles with advanced intelligence have been living in volcanic caverns below the surface of Alaska (one of the most volcanically active parts of the United States and the world) and in other parts of the world. These creatures are a dying breed and are rarely seen by surface dwellers except during brief periods of violent eruptions or volcanic disturbances.

A colony of around three hundred has been living beneath the islands off the coast of Alaska for years, since man first arrived on this continent. Their numbers may have once been more populous—however, contact with man has greatly diminished their

ADVICE ON RUNNING *HUNTERS HUNTED*

After reading the scenario through, you may notice that I include the names of many NPC workmen and *GloboChem* employees on the islands who aren't necessarily relevant to the investigation of the missing persons. I've included them because your players are likely to meet them at some point and they can be as memorable as you want to make them, perhaps waiting at a tram station, they get to know one of the operators. This will make it all the more tragic should an NPC go missing at a later time, perhaps due to the negligence of the players themselves. Whenever you find your players screwing around in the adventure, have people (the named NPCs) turn up missing and other employees working double shifts or even the characters themselves having to fill in for the previously lost soul.

The environment of the *GloboChem* facility should feel very controlled, with the efficiency of the Rail Bus tram system which traverses and connects the islands, and with remote management who seems more concerned with production schedules than human lives. This makes the players feel even more isolated when something goes wrong, like the malfunction of a Rail Bus which stops on the tracks in the middle of the forest, or when communications lines go dead, or when storms and flooding strand them at one of the lighthouses or dock buildings

overnight. To the workmen of the island, these things have become a common nuisance and they've learned to deal with it, but this normalcy has also produced a "Cry Wolf" scenario where management is unlikely to respond quickly to disasters—even though this time the *Keet Ku* may be waiting to devour those who step outside the door.

The *Keet Ku* are atypical antagonists, in that they are less likely to be encountered than is evidence of their passing: dung, pieces of their victims, traps, and stone carvings. Due to their very high stealth capabilities, reptilian patience, and aversion to sunlight, they are incredibly elusive to all but the most alert characters. Only when populations on the island exceed a dozen or more, are encounters more likely, but this is only likely towards the end of the scenario. In addition to their stealth the *Keet Ku* are very dangerous opponents but are fairly ignorant of modern technology like firearms. Characters may find it easier to lure them into traps than fight them head on. The *Keet Ku* prefer to trap prey and then carry them helplessly to the ocean or lake where they will swim with them until they arrive at their underwater caverns. Due to the depth and distance to the tunnels beneath the water, it is more than likely an opponent carried off by the *Keet Ku* will drown before they ever reach the air-filled home of the reptilian horrors.

--Citizen X



KEET Ku

numbers. These vicious reptilian hunters usually only dive from their volcanic tunnels into the ocean to fish and return with food for themselves and families. They maintain a primitive tribal structure and are capable of fashioning basic tools and complex traps for catching prey. The early natives referred to them as Keet Ku or the “Killer Flood Tide”, as the reptile-men would only arrive on land after tsunamis caused by earthquakes or volcanic upsurges from the ocean floor.

The Keet Ku usually only bothered to take children or individuals who were not particularly adept at defending themselves, such as the elderly. But those were different times and humans may have been more adept at survival than they are today. This colony would remain undiscovered in modern times, if not for recent exploitation of the islands by the GloboChem Corporation.

The company has decided to build the world’s largest geothermal power plant to provide free energy for all of the island’s facilities. Geothermal power drilling has punctured into a lava bed beneath the tunnels of the Keet Ku and the growing leak has begun flooding their home with burning lava—driving them into the sea (or through tunnels connected to lake Auk Aan) and eventually onto dry land. Risks

are posed that the pressure build up from the leaking lava will cause a sudden earthquake and perhaps drive all of the hundreds of Keet Ku into surrounding Alaskan islands and wilderness. These ancient predators could not only change the ecosystem, but perhaps develop taste for a new type of prey: Man. In fact, those thirteen missing people are the effect of the few Keet Ku that have begun hunting on the islands during the night after trying to escape the danger of the lava filled caverns below. The effects of dozens or even hundreds of prehistoric hunters could be devastating.

CHARACTERS

WORLD OF DARKNESS CORE

The adventure as written is playable with the core WoD system and many types of characters would be appropriate for investigation into the missing persons and mystery concerning Mary Island and GloboChem Corporation. The primary suggestion for the inclusion of players is to have them be a part of a private investigation firm hired by the relatives of the missing people (or the Tribal Council themselves) or freelance journalists working for environmental organizations looking to discredit the corporation. But this is certainly not the only way to include characters. Occult specialists may be researching

the Tlingit or other Alaskan tribes and be asked for assistance which will be paid in occult secrets. Characters with military backgrounds may be looking for security work and find it readily available at the desperate GloboChem facility and more socially inclined characters may find themselves earning a lot of favors with locals if they can discover the root of the problem.

HUNTER: THE VIGIL

Note: This scenario is primarily written for **Hunter: the Vigil** and so I’ve included extra detail here over the other WoD books.

Independent Hunter cells may be included the same way as those characters for a standard **World of Darkness** game, perhaps with players being part of a P.I. firm or similar investigative group, but the compacts and conspiracies are special cases and provided story hooks and tie-ins allow them to easily be dropped into the scenario from the beginning.

Ashwood Abbey – Alaska is a popular region for rich members of the Abbey to hunt werewolves and other strange beasts of the wilds. It is, in a sense, the last frontier and represents one of the harshest regions in the world. The leadership in the Abbey uses Alaska as a training ground for

new recruits and even veteran hunters. The thrill of the hunt is on and the leaders have heard the reports of the strange disappearances, perhaps some new creature is out there worth hunting and turning into a pair of boots? Abbey members might offer their services as investigators to the Tribal Council or simply stake out on their own, bribing whatever officials need bribing in order to gain access to the island.

The Long Night – There are churches in Ketchikan that could serve as a base for the Long Night's operations and plenty of room in the Alaskan wilderness for armed religious compounds. The Long Night's view on the disappearances may be aimed not at GloboChem but at the Tribal Council themselves, believing their pagan ways have set a curse upon the islands... maybe they're right, it's the players' job to find out.

The Loyalists of Thule – The Loyalists aren't likely to have a very developed presence in Alaska, but being a nearly worldwide organization, it is likely that the players can receive some support given time. The Loyalists' interest may come from documents they have archived from early American explorers on the recorded oral traditions speaking of a mythical beast that snatches away children in the night,

a beast known as the Keet Ku or "Killer Flood Tide." The documents originate in the area where the disappearances are now taking place. Alternatively, the Loyalists of Thule may suspect a scientist working with GloboChem is a former Nazi Scientist in hiding—who knows what his experiments are leading to and if he is responsible for the disappearances.

Network Zero – This compact is an easy fit for the mood of the scenario, as they are seeking to film or photograph whatever is causing the disappearances on Mary Island. Numerous groups would be willing to fund freelance journalists looking to expose GloboChem or get to the bottom of the mystery, from the Tribal Council to environmental activists. The head of Ketchikan's Daily News, anchorman Horner Freeman, may easily be a contact or even a leading member of Network Zero.

Null Mysteriis – The disappearances have an explanation and a natural one, the fears and rumors around GloboChem need to be quelled and the truth brought to light. Null Mysteriis members may have contacts in the scientific community or even within GloboChem itself, who are asking them for assistance in the matter. Dr. Gillard may even be an ally of the organization and

alert the group to the disappearances of his staff.

The Union – The Union doesn't like it when its members go missing and corporations like GloboChem begin hiring scabs off the street to fill the ranks. Beyond helping the families of the missing persons organize rallies and boycotts against the evil company men, the Union is going to want a labor organizer on the island itself – teaching the employees to question what is really going on with GloboChem's research and get to the heart of the mystery. If there is something supernatural behind it all, well, then that needs to be revealed and stopped as well.

Aegis Kai Doru – The native cultures on the West Coast of America and in Alaska were an advanced people and spent much of their time fishing at sea for food. Perhaps they were remnants of the lost civilization of Atlantis? It certainly seems that artifacts are being found on the outer islands. The most recent finding of some sort of gold idol resembling a lizard like beast uncovered during the construction of the GloboChem facility on Mary Island might lead one to suspect that Auk Aan Lake was the Plymouth Rock for Atlantean civilization coming to the new world. If only a member of the conspiracy could in-



filtrate the island and search the site where the relic was found, more evidence might be uncovered and lead to untold treasures hidden by the first settlers.

Ascending Ones – Alaska seems a strange location for members of the conspiracy to be found, but the Ascending Ones still travel great distances to keep the knowledge of beings of darkness, from coming to light. The disappearances pose a risk to revealing the existence of the supernatural and whatever beings may be causing them, the Ascending Ones may be able to reason with them – if not, they will have no other choice but destruction at the hands of true believers.

The Cheiron Group – GloboChem is likely to be a subsidiary company of the Cheiron Group's umbrella (or at the very least a partner in certain chemical research) and it is equally likely that the organization is growing increasingly perturbed by the disappearances of its workers. This means it's time to send some specialists from the company in to set things straight from the sloppy management of Dr. Kennedy and get production back on track. Who knows? Perhaps some unforeseen situation will lead to a new type of marketable product. Looks like a job for the Field Projects Division.

The Lucifuge – Being a worldwide conspiracy, the Lucifuge has influence in some of the strangest locations, even including Alaska. Perhaps hell has finally frozen over? The Lucifuge keeps tabs on occult information that might refer to the existence of dangerous entities, demons in particular, from a variety of cultures. They are likely to be familiar with the Alaskan Indian legends of the Keet Ku or "Killer Flood Tide" that in legend come in the night to steal away children. The disappearances on Mary Island may be connected with this ancient legend and the islands have long been the source of many disappearances, dating back before the settlement of American colonists. It is up to the Lucifuge characters to determine if this legend is in any way connected to the devil in the details.

Maellus Maleficarum – A heretical Catholic conspiracy can still find refuge in many unlikely places and is likely to have some representation in the Catholic Church in Ketchikan. The local bishop Martin Nordic, has records from the days when the church tried to convert the 'heathen Indians' and in them details tales of demonic creatures who would spirit away children and those who travelled alone in the wilderness and specifically on the islands. The player characters are tasked to

find if there is a link and stop these creatures from harming any more humans.

Task Force Valkyrie – The TFFV as a government agency is a highly bureaucratic group and perhaps there have been signs of the coming disaster at Mary Island for a long time now, but it has taken this many disappearances for them to get involved. The field commander for the players' unit is likely to be under a lot of pressure to make sure the incidents are to be taken care of swiftly and with as little publicity as possible. Luke Farway was in the military and he saw some strange things during his tour of duty, it has been his repeated calls to the agency that have finally caused an intervention. He'll do what he can to assist the players in finding out what is happening to the workers at GloboChem's facility.

MAGE: THE AWAKENING

The strange and the weird of Alaska are certain to attract attention of local mages and there is certainly something odd going on with Mary Island. Groups like the Guardians of the Veil and Adamantine Arrow are likely interested in keeping evidence of supernatural events under wraps, while members of the Mysterium and Silver Ladder may find interest in possible connections between early native peoples and the history of Atlantis.

The Free Council may simply be curious about showing other mages that they are capable of solving contemporary problems in a nontraditional way. The central lake of Mary Island may be identified as the focal point for several ley lines, providing an unusual concentration of mana that could be very useful to a Mage who could seize control of it.

VAMPIRE: THE REQUIEM

Vampire characters should be able to operate within the scenario's setting without any changes, although their reasons for investigation are likely to be different. The Prince of Ketchikan is worried about the rash of disappearances. If they are investigated, perhaps disappearances of the vampires' own victims will be too. Should the public become certain that the reasons are supernatural and publicized information about the cause emerges—the Masquerade would be breached putting the vampires themselves in danger. Covenants like the Ordo Dracul may be interested in the nature of Mary Island's central lake as a possible "dragon's nest."

WEREWOLF: THE FORSAKEN

Werewolves easily have the run of wild Alaska, a state with a small population and a lot of open wilderness. This dominance

may be challenged by the possible emergence of a new predator from the islands off shore. A pack in the Ketchikan area connected to the Tribal Council is looking for some brave wolves to investigate the island and discern the cause of the disappearances. Spirit ancestors of the Tlingit tribe have begun to appear and give warnings to their descendents of the dangers of the "Killer Flood Tide." The central lake of Auk Aan on Mary Island is known as a locus for spiritual energy by the tribal people of the area, a fact that may interest many werewolves.

CHARACTER MERITS

These are notes for specific merits, their effects during the course of the scenario, how they can affect the way the adventure plays, and additional options open for investigation.

ANGER SENSE

Those with Danger Sense are likely to sense a trap before they fall into it when trekking through the wilderness on the islands. They will also become suddenly uneasy when in an area around where a Keet Ku is hiding. Even if they cannot see it, they will feel as if they are being watched. This forewarning might prevent them from being the target of an ambush.

UNSEEN SENSE

Since the Keet Ku are not necessarily supernatural creatures, they do not "trigger" a character's unseen sense, although, the islands themselves will have an aura or menace of the supernatural to them, especially around the central lake Auk Aan on Mary Island. Characters with Unseen Sense will begin to see the ghosts of those who have gone missing retracing their paths across the island as they did right before they were ambushed or dragged down into the ocean to die. This is an unnerving sight and while the creatures that killed them will not be seen, watching the ghost of a missing workman covered in the wounds that killed him yanked off into the woods screaming is something one will not forget. This ability also provides that character a clue that the missing workmen were indeed murdered.

NPC LISTINGS

MISSING PERSONS

A list of the most recent persons (13 GloboChem employees) who have gone missing on Mary Island or surrounding areas, in chronological order of their disappearance: See the Missing Persons List.

An exact time/date of the disappearances has not been listed for certain reasons,



but player characters who study the time of the disappearances are likely to notice the following patterns, the original few disappearances were months apart and written off as natural, but recently disappearances have been as close as days or weeks and sometimes multiple disappearances occur at once: such as the twin disappearances of Brandon Walker and Peter Bevis who vanished after leaving together for a stroll to the South Port of Cat Island.

Note: Eventually the players may realize that the time of activation for the geothermal power plant on Mary Island is mere days before the first of the disappearances.

PEOPLE OF INTEREST IN KETCHIKAN

There are more than 7,000 people in Ketchikan, but I've only listed those NPCs the players are most likely to interact with:

David Hartwater, Public Relations and Recruiter for GloboChem in Ketchikan

Dan Burtmuth, former Army Ranger and owner of Big Game Alaska gun store

Colonel Jack Olden, head of Detachment A of the Alaska State Troopers

John Kowee, head of the Tribal Council in Ketchikan

Linda Waagosh, the curator of the Totem Heritage Center

Horner Freeman, leading reporter for the Ketchikan Daily News

Missing Persons List

1. Dan T'aawak, a native tribal construction worker, the first to go missing.
2. Jacen Burrows, core designer and construction planner for the Islands.
3. Randy Watts, oceanic biologist, hired to study the ocean impact of the island project.
4. Laura Berkley, veterinarian who worked at the ecology research lab on Mary Island.
5. John Veniaminov, Russian-born veterinarian assistant who worked at the ecology research lab under Laura Berkley.
6. Walter Blain, veterinarian who worked at the ecology research lab.
7. Anna Katzeek, a Ketchikan tribal native, worked as veterinarian at the ecology research lab.
8. Travis Donaldson, energy consultant from Juneau, worked at the chemical research facility on Cat Island.
9. Peter Bevis, chemical engineer who worked at the chemistry lab on Cat Island.
10. Brandon Walker, chemical engineer, worked on Cat Island.
11. Lindsay Wall, field biologist worked at the ecology research study on Mary Island.
12. Brian Taku, a Ketchikan tribal native and biologist working on Mary Island's ecology research center.
13. Luthor Willow, a half-Indian GloboChem workman, the last to go missing.

GLOBOCHEM ISLAND EMPLOYEES

There are hundreds of NPC workmen on the islands who are not named here, only NPCs that are likely to be frequently encountered by player characters are named and listed:

Dr. Murray Kennedy, the director of the island operation and chief researcher

Luke Farway, the project's chief of security

Dr. Martin Gillard, chief biologist for the ecology research lab on Mary Island

Ted Willis, daytime Fripo island lighthouse operator

Ian Tongass, daytime Fripo island lighthouse operator

Wilbur Ruben, nighttime Fripo island lighthouse operator

Alfred Winchowski, nighttime Fripo island lighthouse operator

Jersey Hudson, the drill station captain on Cat Island

Bill Walker, a Texan workman who oversees the docking of the oil tanker on Cat Island

Alan Jenkins, North Port dock worker on Mary Island

Tim Madsen, North Port dock worker on Mary Island

Jeff Clark, daytime tram operator at North Station on Mary Island

Louis Chenawee, nighttime tram operator at North Station on Mary Island

Jake Morgen, helicopter pilot for the Bell Ranger helicopter used by GloboChem

Cynthia Walt, copilot for the Bell Ranger helicopter

Dirk Jones, eccentric bicycling postal delivery man for Mary Island

Joe Kiway, chief communications technician on Mary Island

Harold Winehalter, chief engineer for the Geothermal Power Plant on Mary Island

Brad Wolf, daytime tram operator at Middle Station on Mary Island

Gary Bates, nighttime tram operator at Middle Station on Mary Island

Lars Francisco, daytime tram operator at South Station on Mary Island

Luther Wallace, daytime tram engineer at South Station on Mary Island

Emile Louis, nighttime tram operator at South Station on Mary Island

Michael Auk-Waay, nighttime tram operator at South Station on Mary Island

Mitch Lowater, South Port dock worker on Mary Island

Mike Drake, South Port dock worker on Mary Island

Frederick White, daytime Switch Track operator for Mary Island

Gary T'silkat, nighttime Switch Track operator for Mary Island

Darek Arthouse, daytime North lighthouse operator on Mary Island

Louis Brighton, nighttime North lighthouse operator on Mary Island

GLOBOCHEM

PUBLIC INFORMATION:

The GloboChem Corporation is an international corporate entity that got its start in the oil industry and expanded into other petroleum based products, it is currently researching new energy sources while continuing to exploit existing reserves of oil in places like Alaska.

GLOBOCHEM'S LEADERSHIP & PURPOSE:

The GloboChem operations on Mary Island are run by an older man with very poor management skills but good expertise in geology and chemistry: Dr. Murray Kennedy who has a PhD from Harvard University. He has been tasked with the exploitation of the oil resources on Cat Island as well as developing alternate energy methods. His second in command on the project is the man who does most of the day to day management on the islands, Luke Farway, a hardy industrial engineer who has done many projects in cold climates. He was a member of a U.S. military project in Antarctica some years back and has a lot of experience with building construction to withstand harsh winters.

GloboChem's goals on Mary Island are suspicious and mysterious to the general public, but rather straight forward.



Their goals are to fully develop a working geothermal power plant on Mary Island, removing the oil reserves from beneath Cat Island for sale internationally, and to maintain a small laboratory in which to develop new types of petroleum based chemicals and even new clean fuel sources. On top of the basic oil harvesting, there comes a general threat to the environment which operations like GloboChem's usually endanger.

In order to appease environmental groups and to pass the seasonal environmental audits, the island maintains a fully staffed biology lab. GloboChem pays experts to constantly monitor the environment of the island for any ill-effects and chart their progress in understanding the ecosystem at the project site.

Martin Gillard, Doctorate of Biology from Cambridge University heads up the small research lab maintained on the island. He has had his trouble, however, since it is mostly his research staff that has gone missing without a trace. This leads many in Alaska to believe that GloboChem is killing its research personnel in order to cover up the damage to the environment the company is causing from drilling and other research. Even Martin is starting to believe these rumors as Luke Farway has

yet to come up with any solid evidence of the issue at hand.

GLOBOCHEM SHIPS:

St. Mary: the St. Mary is an oil tanker that arrives and departs from Cat Island once every month and is captained by Marcus Whitewater. The oil tanker is the only one to operate for the facility at the moment. GloboChem plans on expanding the operation to accept a rotation of three oil tankers a month.

St. Marcus: this supply ship arrives at South Port on Cat Island and then at Danger Island on Mary Island once every week from Anchorage to deposit food and other supplies to the facilities. Its captain is a man named Alfred Totem.

Ulysses Titan: this huge supply vessel arrives at the North Port on Mary Island every month, dropping off sensitive supplies for GloboChem operations. This usually includes science equipment, firearms, and other goods. Its captain is a man named Alan Namor.

Speedboats & Rafts: GloboChem also keeps six speedboats within the islands spread among each dock that allows quick transport between islands. Each is capable of carrying five men. Emergency rafts

capable of holding 6 men each are kept at each boathouse, but require an outboard motor or oars.

THE TRUTH ABOUT GLOBOCHEM

There is no grand conspiracy behind GloboChem, they're just a negligent ambitious corporation – or are they more? It's up to you when you run the scenario, but here are a few options if you feel GloboChem isn't evil enough.

DR. KENNEDY IS MAD!

Perhaps driven mad by spirits of the island, possessed by demons, or simply a little off his rocker—Dr. Kennedy as the negligent manager of the GloboChem project makes a perfect antagonist. As a geologist he would know the most about the volcanic tunnels below the building site for the company project. He may or may not know about the Keet Ku living in them, but as a geologist, he should be aware of the danger that the geothermal drilling could cause leaking of lava into the hollow tunnels. It may be that Dr. Kennedy has scores of sonar maps of the tunnels and has become aware too late of the dangers of the honeycomb beneath the islands and the potential pressure on the fault line. He could be keeping this knowledge hidden simply to save face in the company when

the disaster does occur or simply to conceal his plan of killing off the Keet Ku. If he is indeed under the spell of some supernatural being, Dr. Kennedy may know full well that the company's actions will drive the Keet Ku from their homes and into surrounding Alaska to cause ultimate chaos.

LUKE FARWAY IS A MAN IN BLACK

Luke Farway works for the blackest of black ops, a part of the government that few have clearance to know about, much less what they even do. Maybe they are a part of Task Force Valkyrie, or maybe not. Why would the government have an agent in GloboChem? That's a good question: perhaps Luke Farway looked at Dr. Kennedy's geological data and compared it to maps made by early explorers that have now been classified by the shadow government of the United States. These maps may show the tunnels where the Keet Ku live. Did Luke Farway have some say or even suggest where the geothermal power plant was built? Perhaps the government knows all about the Keet Ku and their plans include destroying them by flooding their tunnels with lava. Perhaps the lava is not flooding the tunnels fast enough to be as effective as originally imagined and now the government is evaluating what it is going to do to destroy the colony of mon-

sters living in Alaska for good— put enough explosives down the drill shaft of the Geothermal Power Generator and maybe a volcanic eruption will take care of them for good.

CONNECTIONS WITH CHEIRON GROUP

Already established if you are running a hunter group with this conspiracy, but there is no reason you can't bring Cheiron into things even in a *Vampire* or *Werewolf* game. This certainly makes things more difficult for the player characters, which may become the target of the research and development department from Cheiron and the machinations of Dr. Kennedy. Perhaps Cheiron knew all about the tunnels beneath the island and their plan was to use an ignorant front company like GloboChem precisely to drive out the Keet Ku from their homes so that they could be tagged and bagged by the Retrieval agents of the Field Projects Division for an experimental new procedure or medicine? Does the Keet Ku have the cure for cancer floating around in their body chemistry? Or maybe a more potent narcotic that makes the crack cocaine epidemic look mild... That would certainly make things more interesting and add an extra layer of horror to the mystery of the islands.

SETTING

The game starts out in the area of Ketchikan Alaska and the main events of the story lead the players to Mary and Cat Islands. See *Ketchikan* in the sidebar.

ALASKA STATE TROOPERS "DETACHMENT A" HQ

The office for the Alaskan State Troopers is headed up by Colonel Jack Olden. Detachment A of the Alaska State Troopers is headquartered in the city and is charged with statewide law enforcement, prevention of crime, pursuit and apprehension of offenders, service of civil and criminal process, prisoner transportation, central communications, and search and rescue for the region surrounding Ketchikan.

If the characters talk with Colonel Olden, he will express that he knows all about the concerns of GloboChem creating pollution and the fact that it may be killing its own workers. He refuses to believe maliciousness on their part after seeing all the effort the corporation has put in trying to cleanse the islands of pollution through the ecological research center. Jack remarks to the players, that Mary Island itself has been completely unused in their oil drilling operation and it is instead being done on the smaller and less ecologically significant Cat Island and that the company is obvi-

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Ketchikan

"Ketchikan is a city in Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska, United States, and the southeastern most sizable city in that state. With an estimated population of 7,368 in 2007, it is the fifth most populous city in the state.

Ketchikan's economy is based upon tourism and fishing, and the city is known as the "Salmon Capital of the World." The Misty Fjords National Monument is one of the area's major attractions.

Ketchikan is named after **Ketchikan Creek**, which flows through the town. Ketchikan comes from the Tlingit name for the creek, *Kitschk-hin*, the meaning of which is unclear. It may mean "the river belonging to Kitschk"; other accounts claim it means "Thundering Wings of an Eagle."

Ketchikan's secondary post office box zip code, 99950, is the highest zip code ever assigned in the United States. Most residents use the zip code 99901. The lower end of the U.S. ZIP Code system is in the town of Agawam, MA, with its reservation defined at 01001. Ketchikan also has the world's largest collection of standing totem poles, located at three major locations: Saxman Village, Totem Bight, and the Totem Heritage Center.

Ketchikan also houses the publishing offices of the *Ketchikan Daily News*. The region has local television programming provided by Ketchikan Public Utilities CommVision, which boasts 12 local channels of constantly updating entertainment, borough assembly, city council, school board, and planning

commission meetings, Southeast Alaska programming, Ketchikan High School sports and events, local history, gardening and scenes, and a calendar of upcoming local events; local television signals are also translations of Seattle and Anchorage stations.

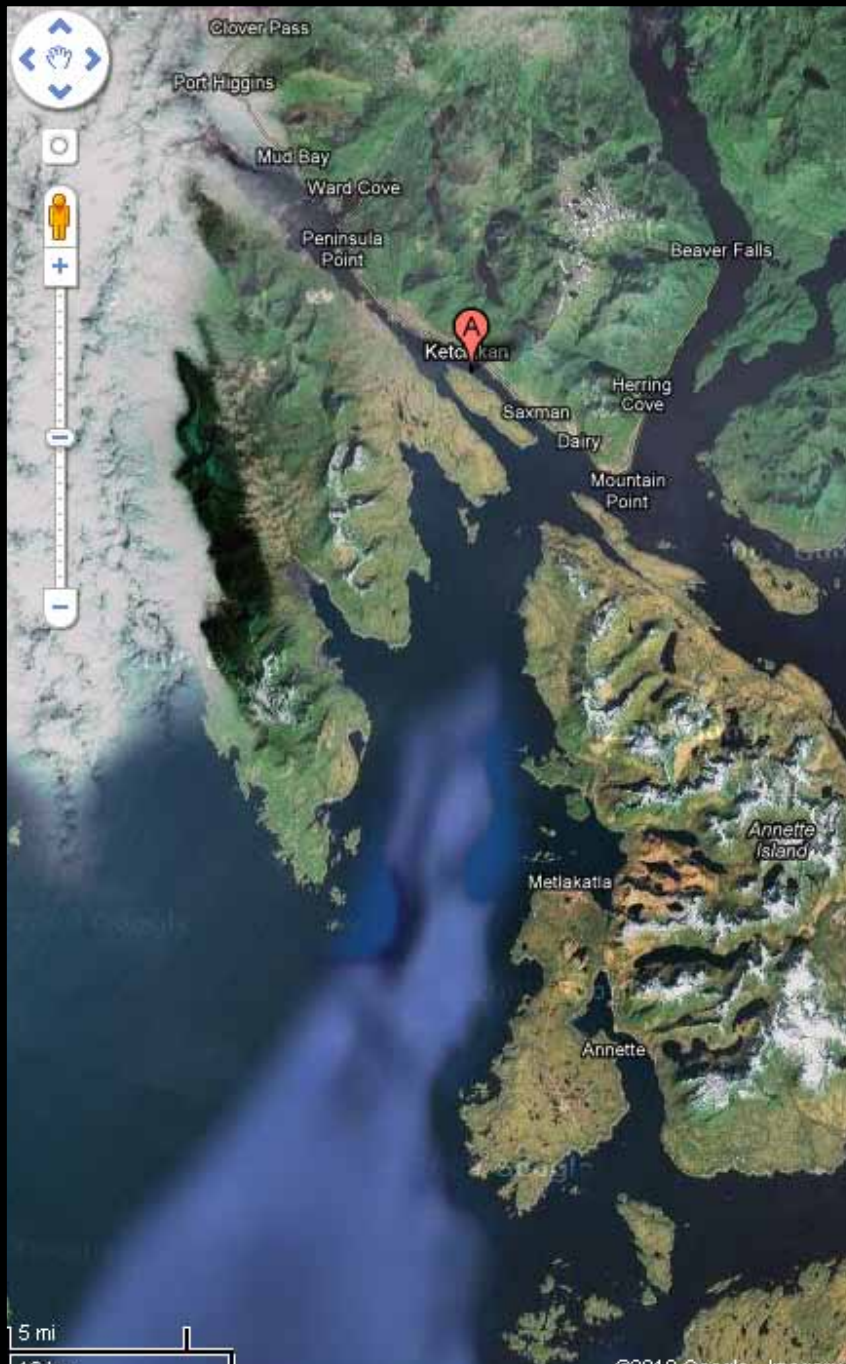
Ketchikan serves as both an air and marine transportation hub for southern Southeast Alaska.

The Ketchikan International Airport serves as both a gateway for Alaska Airlines jet service from Seattle and a bush carrier and charter aircraft hub for destinations like Hyder, Metlakatla, Alaska, and Prince of Wales Island.

Ketchikan receives service from two separate ferry lines. Ketchikan sits on the Alaska Marine Highway's Inside Passage route and sees a large number of ships northbound (to the rest of Alaska) and southbound (to Prince Rupert, British Columbia — where a six hour connection can be made to the BC Ferries system — and Bellingham, Washington). Ketchikan also sees regular day service from the Alaska Marine Highway vessel *M/V Lituya*, a day boat that shuttles between Ketchikan and Metlakatla, its homeport.

The Inter-Island Ferry Authority serves Ketchikan daily (and, in the summer, twice daily) with the day boat *M/V Prince of Wales* from its homeport in Hollis on Prince of Wales Island. Ketchikan often serves as a connection between the Prince of Wales and mainline Alaska Marine Highway vessels that run to the rest of Southeast Alaska."

From Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ketchikan>)



KETCHIKAN, ALASKA





LIZARD TOTEM, ANYONE?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57

ously focusing their efforts on improving the environment there. As for the missing persons, well he and his State Troopers have wandered all over the islands and haven't found anything. In Alaska, he says, people just sometimes disappear without a trace and never are found.

GLOBOCHEM OFFICE

The GloboChem Corporation operates a small office in Ketchikan for hiring local workers and for dealing with any official requests, and as of late, dealing with the press about the disappearances. The front windows are plastered with flyers defying GloboChem that have been highlighted and written upon, dealing with the 13 missing persons cases since the company has been operating on the islands. Inside the office is very neat, filled with posters and newspaper articles promoting GloboChem as a responsible and environmentally safe company, providing job opportunities to Alaska.

David Hartwater is at his desk from 9am-5pm. The GloboChem representative wears a nice suit with tall rubber boots and is usually wearing his signature baseball cap. As Public Relations for GloboChem, David has learned to get defensive in con-

versations in order to shoo off any potential activists setting their sights on the corporation. If investigators make it known they are looking into the disappearances and ask for information or transport to the island, David produces legal documents already laid out on his desk—informing them that only Federal Law Enforcement personnel can gain access to a property without receiving permission from the company that owns it first. This law was designed to prevent acts of ecoterrorism.

GETTING HIRED TO GLOBOCHEM

Due to the disappearances, GloboChem is short staffed and in desperate need of anyone with the least amount of technical skill or prior references. Of course if the investigators have already made their intentions apparent, it's unlikely they will be hired on to GloboChem. The company will pay their way out to Mary Island via the ferry.

THE FERRY DOCK

One of the best ways to get to the islands is by using the ferry (only requires Resources of 1). One can even transport large vehicles like cars and cargo (as long as they have at least 3 in Resources). Small vehicles like motorcycles and normal sized luggage can be transported as well (2 in



Resources). A ferry leaves in the morning and at night every day from Ketchikan.

HIRING A BOAT

Hiring a boat from the Ketchikan pier is also an option, although probably only available to characters with at least 2 in the resources merit, although it must be continued to be rented by the day. With a private boat, the characters are freer in their travel, but without good reason to be on the islands, Luke Farway (head of GloboChem security) will send armed GloboChem employees to greet them on arrival.

KETCHIKAN DAILY NEWS

The Ketchikan Daily News offices operate a citywide newspaper and are connected to the local public station. They have been covering the missing persons and have as of late, been providing a forum for those families of missing GloboChem employees to have their voices heard. Concern about the situation on the islands is growing in the city and many people are outraged at the corporate practices. Horner Freeman is the lead reporter and often the news anchor for the Ketchikan Daily News and has been covering the escalating number of disappearances personally. If there is an event involving GloboChem,

Mr. Freeman is likely to be on scene with his camera crew covering it. He is not allowed access to the offshore islands, but he has more than once done a flyby in a news helicopter to cover events there. The first of which being a search done on the island by the state troopers and rescue personnel for Randy Watts and Peter Bevis.

KETCHIKAN INDIAN COMMUNITY

Ketchikan Indian Community represents the Tongass and Cape Fox Tlingits. The group has a tribal council and provides social and community services to those of tribal descent. John Kowee is the head of the tribal council. The tribal council often meets and organizes in and around the Totem Heritage Center, a large museum showcasing totem poles and varying tribal artifacts from the region.

THE TOTEM HERITAGE CENTER

Those who have befriended a member of the tribal council or the family of missing workmen may find themselves invited for a viewing of the rich heritage of the Tlingit and Tongass tribal peoples. Exploring the museum is also a good idea for anyone interested in the occult history of Alaska, the curator is a woman named Linda Waagosh who is willing to answer any questions. The



players are very likely to find and interact with John Kowee here as well.

Those who spend any amount of time looking at the totem poles in the museum, and make at least two successes from a roll of either Academics (bonus for specialty knowledge of animals), Science (bonus for specialty in biology), or Occult (bonus for specialty in Native American legends), learn the following information:



Clue 1 (2 successes in Academics, Science, or Occult)

The Totem poles all contain representations of real animals that live in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska; these include bears, mountain lions, owls, lynx, seals, etc. Although, in addition to these fairly accurate representations of real animals, there also exists a reoccurring form among them which seems out of place, that of a bipedal lizard-like animal often depicted as very fearsome and demonic. Asking about the reoccurring form may prove difficult.

ASKING ABOUT THE TOTEM LIZARD

If the players approach John Kowee, Linda Waagosh, or other members of the tribal council about the mysterious reptile form on the totem poles, they will at first be standoffish, mentioning that it is a nightmare legend from the tribe's past. If pressed or persuaded with a successful Persuasion, Socialize or Empathy roll, the members of the tribe will be forthcoming with the following information:

Clue 2 (1 success in Empathy, Persuasion, or Socialize)

The figure on the totem poles is a common legend in the Alaskan area referring to a demon known as the Keet Ku who come

and take away children and the infirm in the night. The names of these creatures translate to "Killer Flood Tide," because they seemed to appear most frequently after tsunamis and heavy storms. Discussing or saying their name is considered bad luck.



BIG GAME ALASKA SURVIVAL SHOP

It is likely that investigators who suspect foul play may wish to arm up and go to the islands well prepared, the best store for getting survival supplies and firearms is

Big Game Alaska run by Dan Burtmuth. This gun store carries a lot of very heavy firepower, as the average Alaskan worries about a chance encounter in the woods with a Kodiak or other type of bear and knows they need something capable of taking it down. Included among the supplies are nonlethal deterrents like "bear mace" and noise making devices. The store carries more supplies than those relating to self defense, including: cold weather clothing, first aid kits, and water filtration systems, camping and climbing gear, etc.

Dan Burtmuth is a former Army Ranger and former wilderness guide and tends to get along quickly with the "outdoors type" and other veterans. Despite legal ramifications, a character with the right contacts who spends some time with Dan might catch a break and be sold weaponry such as automatic weapons or sawn off shotguns, which are typically illegal except to those with appropriate permits. A successful Streetwise check by a character looking to purchase illegal weapons may be pointed in the direction of Dan. Mr. Burtmuth's services also extend to chartering small airplanes or helicopters to reach remote regions of Alaska and for those looking to hire guides.

Ketchikan Rumor Chart

1. GloboChem employees have been going missing since last year, which coincides with the construction of some new power plant on the island.
2. The Tribal Council is upset with GloboChem's activities because they disturb a spot that was once territory of the Tlingit tribe and they feel the company is raping the land of its resources.
3. The PR guy for GloboChem is pretty defensive about any non-police investigations of the islands or into the disappearances, fearing environmentalist and ecoterrorist activity.
4. GloboChem is desperate to hire new workers, because people are now reluctant to join with the company because of the high ratio of missing persons, so they are willing to hire almost anyone with basic skills.
5. Occasionally killer whales/orcas and sea lions are a sight near the shores and islands in the area.
6. The Col Olds went to Mary Island with several local deputies and police from Juneau who searched the island to no avail. They have found no evidence of foul play and suspect animal attacks or accidental drowning. Everyone thinks the Colonel has been paid off by GloboChem.
7. It is expensive to take a car by ferry out to the islands and it is a lot easier to use a dirt bike or ATV on the trails and areas that might not be accessible to cars anyhow.
8. The local families rally together to post flyers blasting GloboChem for their dangerous work environments and are looking to see if someone will bring back pictures and evidence of malpractice on the part of GloboChem. They think that the company is doing some dangerous research which resulted in their family member's deaths and that GloboChem is covering it up. Possibly even killing people themselves in order to prevent evidence of the harm they are doing to the environment leak to the press.
9. Occasionally important GloboChem corporate employees fly out to the island via helicopter and supply ships seem to be coming to the islands every few weeks. An oil tanker is seen to come and go every month or so. No one is real sure what-all they ship to the islands or for what purpose.
10. Horner Freeman is the local news anchor and is one of the best journalists in Alaska, because he actually cares about exposing the truth of any situation and not just ratings. If anyone needs any help about an obscure topic, such as GloboChem's financial history, he'd be the man to see because of all his contacts and experience.

If asked about his opinion on the disappearances on the island, Dan does not seem to suspect foul play. He knows first hand how dangerous the Alaskan wilderness can be, especially for "city-slicker" corporate types.

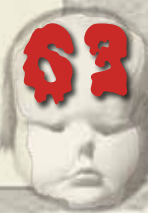
WORD ON THE STREET

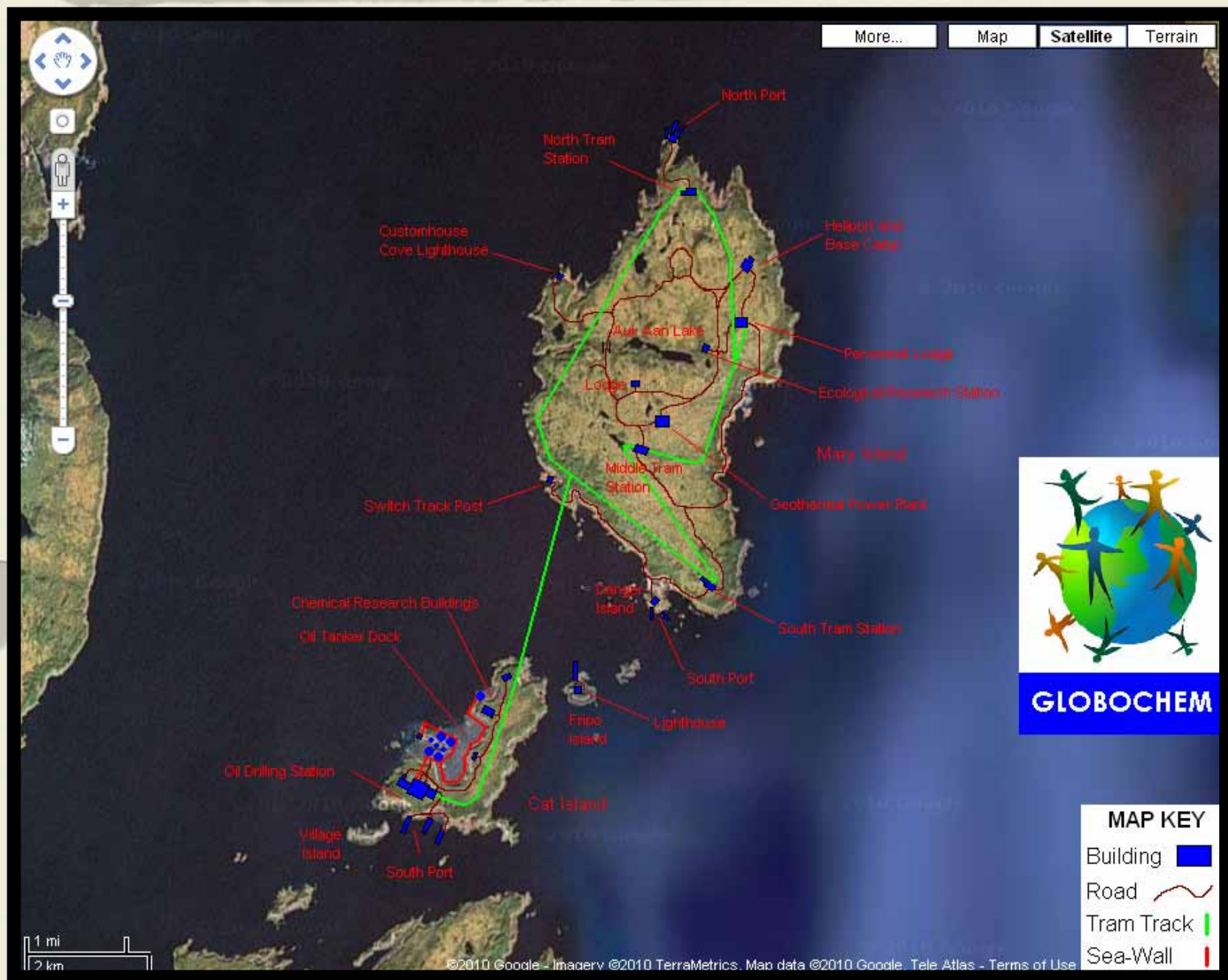
There is a lot of talk on the streets and among the people of Ketchikan about Globochem, the Tribal Council, and the missing people. Characters may learn this information through NPCs directly, or alternatively they learn one rumor for every success made on a Streetwise or Socialize roll when carousing in the city. The GM can feel free to add more rumors and perhaps some red herrings in the mix. Not all information discovered in the town may be relevant.

THE ISLANDS

The most common way to reach the islands from Ketchikan is by ferry to the North Port of Mary Island or by chartered boat to any of the islands. There is also a helicopter landing pad on Mary Island allowing corporate higher ups to come and go when they please.

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MARY AND CAT ISLANDS

MARY ISLAND

NORTH PORT

This part of the island is marked by several sturdy cement docks and a single boathouse for storage. The boathouse has an office with two overnight bunks for the workers who typically help unload any crates from ships with forklifts in the storage warehouse. There is a place for the ferry from the mainland to dock and unload any company vehicles or supplies directly onto the dirt road of the island. Alan Jenkins and Tim Madsen are the two GloboChem employees who manage the docks. Alan usually runs out to greet any new employees. The Overnight office contains plenty of stored up foods in the freezer and storm cellar. In the cellar are emergency supplies: winter blankets, flashlights, flare guns and flares, first aid kits, a fold out stretcher, and even two weapon lockers (each locked and containing a Mossberg shotgun). Alan keeps the keys for the weapon lockers on his person. Flooding is not a problem in the facility due to special measures.

THE TRAM RAIL SYSTEM

Also called the "Rail Bus" by GloboChem employees, the rail track travels all around Mary Island and to a switch-track that leads to an overwater bridge

(anchored to the bottom of the ocean) connecting eventually to Cat Island.

There are five trams that run on a circular pattern around the track at a rate such that there will be one tram at each station every few minutes. All trams run at a relative speed, controlled by the tram operators themselves, to prevent any collisions from occurring.

The tram cars have a max speed of 40 miles per hour and hold up to fourteen passengers with space for luggage in the spacious rear and back of each car. There are four doors, two on each side, one in the front and one in the rear. The passengers have no control over the movement of the tram themselves and no operator rides on board as the system is highly automated.

A character with Science skill and is good with electronics repair may be able to stop a car prematurely by tampering with the wires inside each car. In addition, there is an override panel inside the front of each car that requires an operator's key to open (or it can be busted open: Durability 3, Structure 4). Once the Emergency stop switch has been pulled, the tram immediately stops and all operators are alerted (usually all cars are stopped in this instance to prevent a collision). The doors to tram cars are designed to open automatically

when the car is stopped and at a station, however, an emergency lever above each door can be pulled to open them regardless. Again an alarm sounds in the car and in each operator booth.

If a car is stopped somewhere other than a station and there is obviously a problem, an SUV is sent from the nearest station to each tram to pick up the passengers. A special ladder can be attached to the luggage carrier of each SUV which will provide access from the top of the SUV to the raised tram rail—allowing passengers to climb down safely.

NORTH STATION

This raised platform has stairs leading from the forest floor to its enclosed operator booth and roofed station house. A small glass booth marks where the operator sits and monitors the Island's railway. One can learn when the next tram arrives and where the next station is from the employee stationed here. There are two employees who work on a shift at North Station. Their GloboChem SUV is typically parked in the shade of the station's support pylons. Jeff Clark is on the day shift and Louis Chenawee is on night shift.



HELIPORT AND BASE CAMP

This two story windowless office building is the main operations center for the whole island. A large vehicle garage sits on the ground level that can hold all eight GloboChem SUVs on the island and also stores two ATV four wheelers. The roof of the building serves as a helipad and refueling station. Access is gained through stairs leading to the roof. Inside the main building first floor are a cafeteria, convenience store (stocked with GloboChem products), a visitor's center (a show for important guests on site), large kitchen, and several storage areas for food, supplies, and emergency situations.

Additionally, the first floor is home to the island's Post Office, run by an eccentric postmaster: Dirk Jones. Dirk spends much of his time riding around the island on a bicycle collecting mail to be sent home to loved ones and to hand out mail that has arrived for various employees (especially urgent packages for Dr. Kennedy, Gillard, or other high ranking members of GloboChem). Every few weeks the mail is collected and shipped back to anchorage aboard one of the supply boats. Dirk Jones has been tasked by Dr. Kennedy and Luke Farway to check each letter before it's sent out in order to make sure employ-

ees are not violating their nondisclosure agreements.

Postmaster Jones always carries a Springfield Scout Rifle strapped to his back when he leaves the facility. but he carries it for self defense after the disappearances.

Springfield Scout Rifle

This over-under survival rifle is really only good for hunting small game:

.22 LR - Damage: 2, Range 30/60/120, Capacity: 1 /

.410 gauge - Damage: 2 (9 again), Range: 10/20/50, Capacity: 1)

The building includes a storm cellar filled with supplies and a locked door that leads to an armory. The keys for the armory are only in the hands of Luke Farway. Employees who feel the need to carry a rifle on the island must consult with him first before they can check out a gun. The armory includes a host of small arms: a few Airlite revolvers, shotguns, survival rifles, hunting rifles, and even a few tactical sniper rifles (more at Luke's request than anything).

The second floor of the base camp is taken up entirely by the communications room for the island. There are backup systems controls for the geothermal power plant, the oil drilling station, and the tram

operator stations. Usually only four techs spend their time in here during the day to monitor communications of ships and boats passing or arriving at the island—as well as to keep in contact with GloboChem corporate offices around the world. An overhead map screen, updated every second, shows the location of each tram on the rail and the SUV vehicles (which are all monitored with GPS) that go around the island. The only vehicles not tracked are the frequently used four-wheeler ATVs, Dr. Kennedy's personal car, and Dirk Jones' bicycle. Luke Faraway often stops by to spend his time here in the communications center to get an update on the status of the island. Joe Kiway is the lead tech who monitors the systems and works late into the night. The three other techs alternate their shifts. All travel from the personnel lodge to the facility and back is usually via SUV.

THE CONCERNS OF LUKE FARWAY

Luke Farway constantly worries about *ecoterrorists* and has ordered Joe Kiway to give him constant radio updates about any suspicious boats that come near the islands and don't identify themselves clearly. He suspects that the disappearances may be the actions of ecoterrorists who have infiltrated the GloboChem Corporation. This paranoia extends to everyone but Joe



Kiway and Dr. Kennedy himself. Luke has decided to make everyone carry radios at all times in case of an incident and has put together a makeshift brig in a storage room at the base camp (although he hasn't revealed this to anyone yet, not even Dr. Kennedy).

Luke Farway is unlikely to trust any new GloboChem employee (most likely the player characters) and will be outright hostile and standoffish to any sort of investigators coming to his island. If he can, he will send them right back where they came from, even at gunpoint if need be. Those caught snooping around his islands will be captured and held in the brig. The Alaska State Troopers and Colonel Olden will be alerted of their trespassing on corporate property. Luke won't let them be hauled away by the authorities without first interrogating them himself. He will be certain they are part of the ecoterrorist conspiracy and will want to know what their plans involve for GloboChem's facility.

PERSONNEL LODGE

This lodge is suspended on concrete pylons above a makeshift garage where vehicles are kept and where stairs and an elevator allow access to the housing above. The lodge resembles a treetop hotel with big windows that view the surrounding for-

est and ocean. Along one edge of the lodge is where the tram stops, allowing quick access to the rail system so that employees can reach their work posts during shift changes. There is a switch track to a dead-end railway which goes into a garage on the opposite side of the lodge on the upper floor. This garage was built to store a damaged Rail Bus until it can be repaired.

The lodge has enough housing for forty people. Each room is set up similar to a hotel, except with bunk beds (two workers share one room as they often are separated by day and night shifts). The lodge is sparse at best and there is only a community recreation room complete with couches, satellite TV with stations from the Alaskan area, vending machines, arcade machines, and a pool table.

ECOLOGY RESEARCH STATION

This one story research lab and facility is overlooked by the personnel lodge on the hill above. On the outside of the lab are kennels and cages holding rabbits, squirrels, young deer, and other animals from the islands that were captured by the research team. These animals are typically only held for a short time, checked for health by Dr. Gillard, and then rereleased. Typically workers drive vehicles out to the lab each day and only Dr. Martin Gillard

lives full time inside. The lab has a 24-hour observation bubble with a 360 degree camera network to constantly record information from the surrounding forest. The interior is divided into the observation area where windows overlook the forest and lake, a veterinary facility, a biology laboratory, and Dr. Gillard's office. Martin's office storage closet has been converted into a small bedroom complete with his bunk. Kept in the lab are half a dozen Puma Air Rifles and roughly a hundred tranquilizer darts for use on capturing animals from the island.

TALKING TO DR. GILLARD

Dr. Gillard has lost six research personnel, all but one going missing at night. Three of them were tasked to collect samples from the woods and observe nocturnal animal behavior, when they disappeared. The stress of his employees going missing so frequently has given Dr. Gillard a very solemn attitude and doubt on the success of the project. He feels personally responsible for his research assistants' safety and is desperately attempting to find what has caused them to go missing.

Recently his research of the island has begun to turn grim: the population numbers for deer and small mammals has decreased drastically during the last



6 months. He fears that the only grazing animals left on the island may be the ones in his cages. Of late he has found on a few morning expeditions a strange spore. The droppings appear to be left by a large bird or reptile. The digested contents contained in the spore included small mammals and fish.

The doctor has become convinced that a new carnivore has made its way onto the island. His initial theory is that of a salt water crocodile, although even he will admit that it sounds like fantasy in such a cold climate.

Dr. Gillard is currently without an assistant and needs someone to travel into the woods and collect more samples of the mystery spore for him. He also wants to locate Charley the bear (see below) and tranquilize him, to make sure he was not responsible for the missing people on the island.

ANIMAL LIFE ON THE ISLANDS AND STRANGE BEHAVIOR

There are a number of commonly found animals in the Alaskan islands, but on Mary and Cat islands, their behavior has become suddenly strange. Anyone who spends time in the wilderness or near ani-

mals will be allowed a Wits + Composure roll to identify some of their strange behaviors. Alternatively, Dr. Gillard may relate this information to the player characters if a storyteller finds it appropriate.

SEA LIONS

There are sea lions constantly roosting on the beaches of the islands during the day, but observations of them will note that they are never around after dark. Indeed, each sunset the sea lions head back into the sea to disappear until long after dawn.

BALD EAGLES AND SEA GULLS

Observation of the eagles and sea gulls notices that they circle more and more inland, as if scavenging for scraps left by rotting animals.

LYNX

There were only a handful of them on the islands to begin with, but they seem increasingly unhealthy (as if they are starving due to lack of prey animals) and often very jumpy. A lynx attack may occur on a character walking in the woods (especially if they have food) or someone cooking outside, but it is unlikely to be a serious threat.

MOOSE

There are a few moose that swim to and from the various islands and often cause a lot of stir when encountered by employees. The moose are actually very good swimmers and fairly intelligent as well as dangerous. If you see a moose take off running, you know something truly dangerous is close by.

ELK AND DEER

The numbers of elk and deer are drastically dwindling on the island and only the fittest animals seem to be left. When encountered they seem skittish and sometimes will even blunder into parts of the human camps, such as vehicle garages – tearing things up and then staying put. Removing the deer from human enclosures is dangerous work.

SEA OTTERS

The sea otters are often seen in Lake Auk Aan or bobbing around in the ocean. They have started to become less frequent members of the fauna around the island. Many people have noted their disappearance and become depressed at not being able to see the cute animals swimming by.

FOX

The fox population on the islands has all but disappeared, only a few remain in Dr. Gillard's cages it would seem.

BEARS

There is only one bear on any of the islands that is known about, a big brown bear everyone calls Charley Brown or Charley bear. He hasn't been seen as often, but usually appears near Auk Aan Lake, perhaps to night fish.

AUK AAN LAKE

Parts of Auk Aan Lake are overlooked by tall cliffs and hills covered in dense forest. As the primary body of fresh water on Mary Island it is monitored by the Ecology Research Station nearby. Surrounding the interior part of Auk Aan Lake are large stones, some as big as a car, seemingly carved by human hands and covered with paintings reminiscent of early Native American cave drawings. The lake is the usual territory of Charley the Bear, who has become elusive recently. Among the lake cliffs are some small cave systems, but none connect to the Keet Ku tunnels far below the island.

STUDYING THE STONE CARVINGS

Studying the standing stones painted over with images of tribal scenes, requires some time and a Wits + Composure roll. A success indicates that a character notices something unusual about all the "people" depicted in the paintings. The images are crude, but they clearly show a short tail and glowing yellow eyes. If the characters had studied the totem poles and learned about the Keet Ku, they will recognize the image.

STUDYING THE CAVES

Walking through the caves on the cliffs of the Lake are sure to uncover bats and perhaps even startle Charley the Bear himself—who already has reason to be frightened—although continued exploration may reveal more drawings resembling the stones around the lake. Artifacts litter the floor in some areas: stone carved tools and weapons from days long ago. Those characters with the Unseen Sense merit seem drawn as if by a magnet to one particular part of the cave where an idol sits. In that particular area of the cave, a stone shelf has been carved away from the wall and a single idol of crudely hammered gold sits glittering through the grime of ages. The idol reveals a squatting creature resembling a reptilian humanoid. The idol's mouth is a toothy smile spread wide and its eyes shine

with yellow topaz inlaid into deep sockets. The whole idol weighs 60 lbs (27 kg) and stands nearly 18 inches (45 cm) tall. If it could be recovered it would certainly be worth something on the market in materials alone, but as an artifact it might be far more valuable.

STUDYING THE WATERS OF AUK AAN LAKE

As the tunnels below the island are flooded more and more with magma, it becomes apparent that the acidity (ph level) of the lake is changing making it unlivable for fish, and may even in some areas, be at a boiling temperature. The acidic waters will eventually be poisonous for any life trying to swim through it. This effect will trap the Keet Ku that have already swum onto the forest shore to the interior of the island. A ph test done of the waters by a character with Science background will show an increasing acidic trend in the Lake.

LODGE

This lodge is a large cabin that houses some of the higher ranking members of GloboChem on the island. Dr. Murray Kennedy, Luke Farway, and Dr. Gillard all have large bedrooms here. Dr. Gillard no longer stays here though, preferring



THE IDOL OF THE KEET KU

Durability: Indestructible

Size: 2

Structure: Indestructible

Powers*: *Glimpse* (3), Cost: 2 Willpower, Dice Pool: Wits + Resolve, Action: Instant

Sense Creature: Keet Ku (2), Cost: None, Dice Pool: no roll, Action: Reflexive, Range: works within 100 yards

Manufacture Verge (5), Cost: None (or 1 mental attribute dot), Dice Pool: Presence + Occult, Action: Extended (5-15+ successes depending on the population of the area)

Curses*: *Danger Magnet* (2)
Insidious Bargain (2)

History: This idol was made by an ancient leader of the Keet Ku (back when the creatures accessed the islands more easily) to control the tribe and prevent his enemies from sneaking up on him. The idol was hand sculpted by the creature from solid gold and gained its power through pacts with several spiritual entities, who are still bound to the idol and who watch over it. The ancient Keet Ku shaman found his power in the tribe waning, as the first humans on the islands began hunting the tribe to extinction. The human hunts were in retaliation for the Keet Ku tribe kidnapping human children to give as sacrifices to the spiritual entities the shaman was worshipping. As punishment for the failure of his warriors to repel the humans, the shaman used the idol to create a spiritual rift through the gauntlet, which devoured the surface tribe once and for all. Those who still lived in the tunnels were immune to the spiritual disaster, but for some reason the idol and the shaman survived the atrocity. Outraged, the subterranean Keet Ku murdered the shaman by luring him into a well prepared trap. The Keet Ku would not approach the shaman themselves because the idol would alert him. The subterranean Keet Ku put the idol into a cave far away

from their tunnels, removing the curse to their people that the idol was.

Description: Those who are sensitive (that is, possess Unseen Sense as a merit or similar ability) can hear faint sounds like radio static around the idol. Sometimes the static forms words that warn of curses and danger. Being starved for Willpower, the spirits in the idol will activate the Glimpse power (stealing 2 Willpower, if available) to the first person to touch the idol—after that the idol will function as normal. The first vision seen will be of the history of the idol's creation, the destruction of the Keet Ku surface tribe, and the death of its creator. The idol's other powers are not readily apparent, but even those not sensitive may accidentally uncover its curse. Once the Keet Ku realizes someone is in possession of the artifact, they will do anything they can to kill the user and return the artifact to its place in the caves by Lake Auk Aan. Additionally, strange incidents seem to happen around the artifact, cars will fail to start, lights will flicker and go out, trees may fall across a road blocking a path, flash floods will ruin a campsite, or other inconvenient events will befall the user and those travelling with them.

When a Keet Ku gets within 100 yards of the idol, the topaz eyes of the statue begin to glow brightly. Additionally, a character who studies the idol for some time (at least 10 successes in an extended Occult roll) will uncover its ability to create a Spirit Verge that breaches the gauntlet. Such activation is very dangerous to the user as well as anyone foolish enough to blunder into the artifact.

Destruction: The only way to destroy the Idol of the Keet Ku is to allow it to create a Verge and return to the spirit world. Activating this power normally destroys the idol unless a permanent mental attribute is spent to keep it from vanishing.



to sleep at the Ecology Research Station. The lodge also has a garage where Dr. Kennedy's notable black Mercedes-Benz is typically parked. There is a gun cabinet in the main room of the lodge which holds a few shotguns and rifles. They are rarely removed from their case. Dr. Kennedy also has a small office in the Lodge, complete with computer and systems linkup to the chemical lab on Cat Island and the communications network for the whole island.

GEOTHERMAL PLANT

This huge plant tangled with massive pipes, valves, and tanks sits quietly humming near the middle of the island. There is a parking lot where vehicles are usually found, and the controls inside the plant are manned by at least ten men at all hours of the day. There is a lot of sulfur corrosion around the pipes and the power generators themselves requiring workers to spend a lot of time cleaning them. The primary operation of the plant includes dipping a long magma tap into the Earth's crust. This magma tap is unwittingly allowing lava to leak into the tunnels below. From the leak below comes the sulfurous steam that corrodes the machinery daily. The plant powers most of the island

and the interior stinks badly with the rotten egg smell of sulfur. In most areas, respirator masks are required. The head engineer at the plant during the day is Harold Winehalter.

TALKING WITH HAROLD WINEHALTER

Harold has been too concerned with the technical problems of running a geothermal power plant to be worried about the missing persons on the islands. If asked, Harold did know Luthor Willow—one of the few non-research personnel who went missing. Luthor's job was primarily to drive around and check the railway supports at all areas throughout the woods—making sure that there were no threats of a pylon falling over and part of the tram rail collapsing at any of the junctions. The ATV he was riding was found in the morning, still running next to one of the concrete

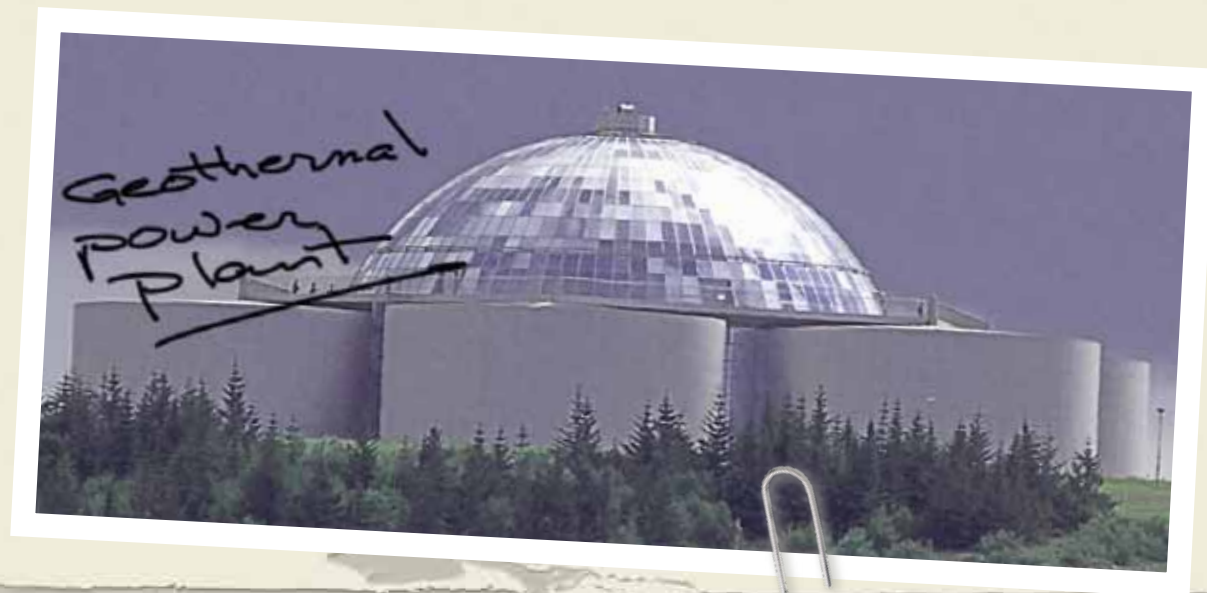
supports near Customhouse Cove by the service road just across the bridge.

MIDDLE STATION

Middle Station is a raised platform that has stairs which go up to it. There is an enclosed tram station and a small glass booth where the operator sits. One can learn about the arrival times of each tram and where the next station is from the operator. At the Middle Station there are two operators who work in shifts. Often their GloboChem ATVs are parked at the foot of the station's platform during their shift. Brad Wolf is on the dayshift and Gary Bates is on the nightshift.

SOUTH STATION

The South Station is also a raised platform with stairs going up to it. The whole top level serves as a minor repair bay for



trams and a major control hub, with an office where at least an operator and an engineer are always present. When a tram needs more than minor repairs, it is taken to the garage in the personnel lodge area and the engineers from South Station spend time doing their work in the better equipped facility. The operator can provide information on the arrival of trams and the location of the other stations on the island. At the South Station there are two employees who work on each shift here, their four wheeler ATVs are typically parked at the foot of the platform. Lars Francisco is on the day shift as the operator with Luther Wallace as the engineer. Emile Louis (operator) and Michael Auk-Waay (engineer) are on the night shift. It was Luther Wallace who realized Mr. Willow was missing and found his ATV on the following morning.

TALKING WITH LUTHER WALLACE

If asked, Luther Wallace will describe what it was like when he found Willow's four wheeler still running. He mentions that the region of woods was very quiet and there were no animal sounds at all. Luther walked around for a bit, yelling for anyone who would hear him, but the quiet finally disturbed him and he left after he thought he heard movement from the

trees. The ATV was left to be picked up later by someone with a car.

SOUTH PORT

This part of the island is marked by several sturdy cement docks with a single boathouse nearby. The boathouse has an office with overnight bunks for two workers who typically unload crates from ships with forklifts. Mitch Lowater and Mike Drake are the two employees who typically manage the docks. The overnight office in the boathouse contains numerous supplies, food, and a storm cellar stocked with the following: blankets, flashlights, flare gun and flares, first aid kits, a fold out stretcher, and two weapon lockers containing two Mossberg shotguns. The keys for the lockers are kept by Mike Drake. Typically there are two speedboats kept here on this part of the island. The employees of the dock only have one ATV four wheeler with which to travel the island. Mitch and Mike both knew Randy Watts, one of the missing persons.

TALKING WITH MITCH AND MIKE

Randy Watts' job was to check on the sea lion, fish, and sea otter populations of the islands, in order to collect data on GloboChem's environmental impact. After Watts was out one night months ago, his

boat was found adrift near Fripo Island. The men searched for Randy in a speed boat for a whole day, finding nothing, and reported the incident to Dr. Kennedy who was slow to call in the authorities. Watts was the only employee not to go missing on dry land.

SWITCH TRACK POST

This tower suspended above the forest floor contains one operator at all times. The purpose of the post is to switch the tram track to allow for travel between Mary Island to Cat Island or back. The operator must be informed ahead of time of the intent to travel between the islands, so that the track can be changed before the tram reaches the junction. Many find travel on the tram bridge between islands disorientating or even frightening, as they run along a thin rail over the vast ocean. The operator during the day is a man named Frederick White. At night Gary T'silkat manages the booth. The man on duty typically has an ATV four wheeler parked at the foot of the tower. Gary T'silkat has become very paranoid and when on shift at the tower always carries a survival rifle checked out from the armory.

TALKING WITH GARY T' SILKAT

Gary carries his rifle on shift every night, a fact Luke Farway is aware of and has asked him about. Gary claims that one night he saw Charley the Bear lingering at the bottom of the tower. This is of course a lie, Gary saw something entirely different that night, but even he wasn't sure what it was—simply that he was very frightened by it and now he's not taking any chances, especially with the recent disappearances.

CUSTOMHOUSE COVE LIGHTHOUSE

This distinctive looking lighthouse is a sight seen by nearly everyone arriving at the island and is operated by a single man whether day or night. On the ground floor of the lighthouse is an emergency room with bunks for four people and storage space for emergency supplies. During the day shift Darek Arthouse is on duty and at night Louis Brighton works. The men usually have a hunting rifle and several boxes of ammunition, so during the day and even during the night, the men use the rifle to practice shooting seagulls that roost on the rocks below the lighthouse. The men have a running competition on how many seagulls that they can shoot on a shift, currently Darek is leading, a fact that Louis blames on his daylight work schedule. The

eccentric hunters have made the sound of gunshots a common sound on this part of the island. At any time day or night shots can be heard echoing around all of Mary Island when it's quiet.

CRYING WOLF WITH THE SOUND OF EXPLODING GUNS

Firing off a gun isn't a sure fire way to attract attention on Mary Island, an employee or visitor could be fighting for his or her life and the most immediate reaction by those who overhear it will be to think of Darek and Louis with their silly competition on shooting seagulls.

RUMORS ON THE ISLAND

Mary Island is the largest GloboChem facility, although not necessarily the most heavily populated (Cat Island has more workers), but it is laid back enough that many NPCs are likely to be encountered and have the time to chitchat with the players. Characters may learn rumors through NPCs directly. Alternatively, they can learn one rumor for every success made on a Streetwise or Socialize roll. The GM can feel free to add more rumors and perhaps some red herrings in the mix.

ISLAND WILDERNESS RANDOM ENCOUNTERS (DAYTIME & NIGHTTIME)

Roll 1d10 or as the Storyteller simply choose an event. This chart can be used for any of the outlying islands' wilderness areas. Additionally, the Storyteller can decide to "expose" a character to one or any number of these events based on the successes given on a Survival or Investigation roll when searching the island.

DANGER ISLAND

A small island near South Port, Danger Island lives up to its name by being hard to land on even via boat. The rocky shore is constantly being swept with the tide and almost no animals aside from the occasional birds dare venture here. The island has no human construction but it is slightly volcanic, occasionally discharging small geysers or steam. Unknown to most, there is a cave entrance (filled with cave drawings of strange creatures swimming, fishing and worshipping around standing stones) which leads into the Keet Ku tunnel network.

FRIPO ISLAND

A small island between Mary and Cat Island, this island is home to a large lighthouse structure with a small port for the

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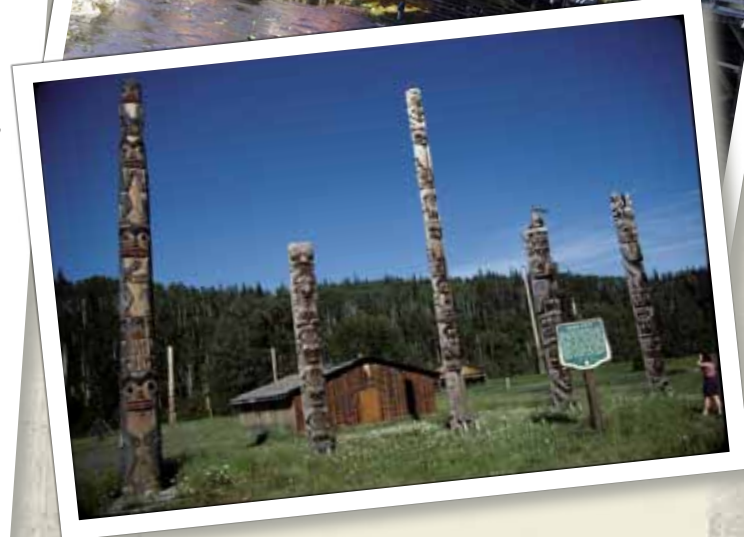
MARY ISLAND RUMORS

1. Louis and Darek spend their time at the Customhouse Cove Lighthouse shooting seagulls for practice, day and night. So if you ever hear any gunshots in the north part of the island, it's nothing out of the ordinary.
2. Many of the missing people were walking on Mary Island at night in the woods and no one has seen any sign of them since. If they had a vehicle, it was usually found abandoned by the side of the road. Luke Farway supposedly found some scraps of clothing when Jacen Burrows went missing, but no one knows for sure.
3. To get to Cat Island on the Rail Bus, you have to talk to an operator at the station before you leave, who will alert the switch track operator when your tram comes around to that point on the track. The Rail Buses are the best way of travel around the island to important locations and they run continuously day and night.
4. There is one bear that lives on the island and roams around. His nickname by Dr. Gillard is Charley and people call him Charley Brown, because he's a brown bear. Some employees think that Charley might be responsible for some of the disappearances. Although it seems unlikely he could have mauled them all.
5. People have been finding strange Native American drawings on some of the rocks near the interior lake of Auk Aan. Many of the employees suspect that this is why the Tribal Council in Ketchikan is so upset about GloboChem's research facility and that maybe the island was once a holy place for their people.
6. A lot of guns are kept at Base Camp and only Luke Farway has the keys to the armory. Guns have been issued to personnel a lot more frequently since the disappearances. The guns were originally acquired for worry by Luke that ecoterrorists could attack the island facilities.
7. The speedboats are a good way to go between islands if the Tram is out of commission or too slow. Randy Watts disappeared in one of the boats while fishing at night. Unfortunately, the boats are useless during storms.
8. There are only eight SUVs on Mary Island and at least half are being used at any time, but there are numerous ATV four wheelers that can be used to gain full access to the island or travel between points on the road quickly.
9. Dr. Gillard has reported that the population of animals on the island is decreasing dramatically as of late. No one recalls seeing carcasses lying around. It might be that GloboChem's oil drilling and geothermal plants are damaging the environment and driving animals from the islands.
10. Gary T'silkat said he saw Charley Bear at the bottom of the switch track tower during his night shift. Since then he's been pretty spooked and is always carrying a rifle for protection. Some people wonder if he didn't see something else.



ISLAND WILDERNESS RANDOM ENCOUNTERS (DAYTIME)

1. Dead animal carcass: barely anything remains and most of it has been obviously eaten by predators or scavengers. By taking it to Dr. Gillard or if examined by a character with Science or Survival skill, it is revealed that the bite marks belong to an unknown animal and the bones were simply bitten clean through as if by a set of powerful jaws, unlike most carnivores like bears and wolves which chew their prey.
2. A rock or tree has been carved or painted with strange drawings in a prehistoric style. Examination shows ape-like creatures with yellow eyes and sharp teeth in caves or fishing with nets and eating fish.
3. Strange green and white spore (animal droppings) are clustered in a small area. They can be tested to reveal digested bits of mammals and fish by Dr. Gillard or a character with Science or Investigation skill and access to a laboratory. If there are 3 successes or more on the roll, the tests reveal traces of digested human tissue as well, in the droppings.
4. Strange noises like hissing radio static seem to come from somewhere always far away in the woods and stop immediately if the area is approached. Whatever made the static, they are now long gone and no sign of their passing has been left.
5. A strange stench seems to permeate one area of the woods and a Wits + Composure or Investigate/Survival success discovers a scrap of cloth, part of a rubber sole of a shoe, and a fleck of bone that might have been from the finger of a human being (testing will indicate it is).
6. A series of claw marks can be found dug into wood bark in trees in a certain area of woods. Some branches appear as if they've been hacked off or torn from the tree. A success on Survival will reveal they are not bear markings or antler ruts from deer, but something else.
7. Unless the character has Danger Sense as a merit, they need to make a success on a Wits + Composure check or stumble into a pit trap filled with sharpened stakes. Setting off the trap automatically inflicts four points of lethal damage and because the target is primarily the legs of the character, not only will their movement be halved until the wounds are healed, but traditional body armor (like a Flak Vest) has no effect on reducing such damage.
8. The character encounters a fox, squirrel, frightened deer, starved lynx, or some other small animal. The chance encounter or the movement caused by its approach may prove a frightening event.
9. The character encounters a large animal, like a skittish moose or even Charley the Bear, as they forage for food. The animals may attack if approached too closely and especially if the character stumbles into them.
10. Unless the character has Danger Sense as a merit, they need to make a success on a Wits + Composure check or set off a net trap that will, via pulley action, whip them up into a tree to hang helplessly - unless they can cut their way out with a knife and climb down. Simply falling from the net causes 2 Bashing damage.



ISLAND WILDERNESS RANDOM ENCOUNTERS (NIGHTTIME)

1. Dead animal carcass: barely anything remains and most of it has been obviously eaten by predators or scavengers. By taking it to Dr. Gillard or if examined by a character with Science or Survival skill, it is revealed that the bite marks belong to an unknown animal and the bones were simply bitten clean through as if by a set of powerful jaws, unlike most carnivores like bears and wolves which chew their prey.
2. The character encounters a fox, squirrel, frightened deer, starved lynx, or some other small animal. The chance encounter or the movement caused by its approach may prove a frightening event.
3. The investigator is being stalked by a Keet Ku and is unlikely to know it (the dice pool of the Keet Ku is 12 for Stealth and the character is likely to have penalties for darkness on their roll). The creature won't kill them, its merely observing the investigator. Any hostile action by the investigator is likely to drive the Keet Ku off immediately (it would rather flee than be killed). Even fleeing, investigators aren't likely to catch more than a glimpse of something large that seems to be camouflaged very well. Their yellow eyes may gleam in bright lights. A Survival or Investigation success can follow its footprints and path of destruction, which invariably will lead straight into Auk Aan Lake or to the ocean. Its footprints appear similar to those of a very large alligator when left in the mud. A Survival success identifies that the creature is bipedal.
4. Any vehicle, campsite, or item left unattended by the investigators in the woods may be sabotaged or destroyed. If a vehicle, wires may be ripped out, panels torn off, claw marks in the hood, and other damage rendering it useless. Keet Ku teeth can rend metal, but their claws don't do as good against anything but wood, so where they have bitten there may be lost teeth and blood from their jaws. The teeth if investigated with a Science success are likely to be found to not match any current living animal, but an extended research check (8 successes) will reveal the teeth are close to numerous prehistoric carnivores that were predecessors to modern crocodiles. The Keet Ku who did the deed are still hiding nearby, watching the reactions of the investigators. When operating with such confidence, two or three Keet Ku could be present in wait in the surrounding woods. If the group is discovered and approached, they may flee or they may decide to overwhelm the investigators in an ambush. As soon as one Keet Ku loses at least half its health, the attack is likely to be called off and again the hunters flee into the nearest body of water.
5. Investigators surprise a dark form squatting in the underbrush and relieving itself. A small animal is draped from its jaws and the Keet Ku is much more visible than normal. If approached, it will flee towards water, leaving green and white spore on the ground.
6. The investigator is being stalked by a Keet Ku but may have no idea. It will wait to isolate one individual and then make its attack from hiding. Its goal will be to kill or grab one character and drag them back into the tunnels below the Lake or ocean waves. It may be tracked with a success in survival as usual. The Keet Ku may flee the fight if it suffers a serious wound (half its health or more).
7. Unless the character has Danger Sense as a merit, they need to make a success on a Wits + Composure check or stumble into a pit trap filled with sharpened stakes. Setting off the trap automatically inflicts four points of lethal damage and because the target is primarily the legs of the character, not only will their movement be halved until the wounds are healed, but traditional body armor (like a Flak Vest) has no effect on reducing such damage. Being nighttime, the Keet Ku who made the trap is likely close by and will move in to finish off its catch.
8. The character encounters a large animal, like a skittish moose or even Charley the Bear, as they forage for food. The animals may attack if approached too closely and especially if the character stumbles into them.
9. The investigator hears movement in the underbrush and eventually sees someone running, fleeing from the Keet Ku. The character fleeing could be anyone walking home at night on the islands or perhaps an NPC that shouldn't even be there—like a meddling journalist or an ecoterrorist. The investigator must decide if they help the character or use their pursuit to seal their own escape from the nearly invisible stalker.
10. Unless the character has Danger Sense as a merit, they need to make a success on a Wits + Composure check or set off a net trap that will, via pulley action, whip them up into a tree to hang helplessly – unless they can cut their way out with a knife and climb down. Simply falling from the net causes 2 Bashing damage. If the investigators spend too much time in escaping the net, they will encounter a Keet Ku waiting below them – ready to consume their catch. The Keet Ku will climb up the tree and cut down its own net, so that it can pounce on the hapless victim from on high.

speed boats that traverse the two islands. Usually one of the six speed boats is docked here. The dock contains numerous fuel barrels tied down to one of the piers. The lighthouse itself is equipped with bunks for four people and lots of emergency supplies to last through weeks of storm or being stranded on the island. There are usually four people stationed on the island. Ted Willis and Ian Tongass are daytime operators. The nighttime shift includes Wilbur Ruben and Alfred Winchowski. The men on the island have little to contribute in information regarding the disappearances, but are willing to be helpful in any way they can, provided the characters prove themselves trustworthy.

CAT ISLAND

CHEMICAL RESEARCH BUILDINGS

There are three main buildings that are part of GloboChem's primary chemical research facility: the storage shed, a housing building, and the lab itself.

STORAGE SHED

This shed is always locked even though it occasionally has a few drums of chemicals sitting outside of it on palettes for the fork trucks. It looks a bit like a garage and the only people with electronic badges capable

of unlocking the doors to the shed are those who work exclusively at the chemical production laboratory. Inside the lab are dozens of barrels of hazardous chemicals and shelves filled with tons of commercial and natural chemical components for experiments. A character with Science skill (a bonus for Chemistry specialty) can easily make a number of deadly toxic gases, unpredictable explosives, and powerful acids from the materials located here. A failure when doing such chemical experiments is likely to be very devastating for those involved. The Storyteller can determine the exact effects of substances created, but rules for explosives are on page 179 of the core *World of Darkness* book.

CHEMIST HOUSING

This one story building has ten private rooms for chemists staying on the island. It is complete with a storage room and computer lab for supplies and collaboration on projects. Dr. Kennedy sometimes visits the various chemists working here and holds makeshift conferences in the computer lab.

Clue 3 (1 success on a Social skill)

TALKING WITH THE CHEMISTS

The chemical engineers are all under nondisclosure agreements about Dr.

Kennedy's project, so they will not reveal the details unless under intense pressure. But the chemists do have information regarding two of the missing persons. Many of them knew Peter Bevis and Brandon Walker personally and have been told by Dr. Kennedy not to make a big deal out of their disappearance; however, all of them are concerned.

The two men disappeared on the same night while walking together by themselves at night to the South Port on the island. They were going to take a speed boat to Mary Island in order to pick up some of the mail for the chemistry department from Base Camp and to get some supplies that were mistakenly sent to North Port of that island.

CHEMICAL PRODUCTION LABORATORY

This lab is filled with production facilities for chemical research and testing. Industrial laboratory equipment and calibration tools are stored here. Dr. Kennedy works in this building during the day on his excessively secretive project. Only the other ten chemists working on the project are aware of his true mission on the island: develop an environmentally friendly and economically feasible energy source. So far he has been working on a specially refined

form of ethanol that proves to yield incredibly low emissions when combusted.

Dr. Kennedy's office is also located in the facility but always kept locked in his absence. A character with a criminal bent may be able to gain access by lock picking the door; however, they will be found out later if anything is noticeably missing—there is a camera hidden in the hallway. To avoid being seen by the camera, it can be disabled electronically and the recording filmed over with a looped section—doing this requires 3 successes on a Computers skill check. Additional computer successes will be needed to look at Dr. Kennedy's computer files.

Clue 4 (1 success with *Larceny*, 1 success with *Computers*)

Once inside Dr. Kennedy's office a look around reveals a desk computer and many wall-sized geographical maps of all the islands. A character can gain access to his computer by either guessing at his password or using some sort of software to override the operating system. Dr. Kennedy actually forgets the password regularly, so has written it on the bottom of his keyboard with a yellow highlighter: MurrayK101. Among his files are geological data that reveal the presence of a honeycomb of lava tunnels beneath the

islands found during the expedition which discovered oil beneath Cat Island. Also revealed is an active fault line below Mary Island that was used as a way to tap the lava core for use by the geothermal power plant. Those with Science background realize that this may cause an earthquake or other seismic event. Additionally, a character can discover Dr. Kennedy's real project, the clean fuel source formula and the means for production.

Since Dr. Kennedy is not always armed, it is likely that the character will find his personal Glock M17 handgun in the drawer of his office. This may add to the seeming sinister nature of the doctor, but Murray only has the weapon at the insistence and paranoia of Luke Farway, who is certain there are ecoterrorists attempting to bring the island facility down.

MEETING DR. KENNEDY

Old Murray Kennedy is often very busy with his secret fuel research and has been neglecting much of the island's day to day operations having missed a few important phone calls from corporate, all to continue research. This may be a defensive mechanism to avoid realizing that there is something seriously wrong on the islands. Murray's seeming distance and inapproachability even by his own workforce,

has made many workers bitter and left much of the day to day operations done by the increasingly paranoid Luke Farway. Murray's insistence on secrecy to protect his project has given Farway, head of security, *carte blanche* in running the island as a strict operation. Dr. Kennedy is often in the laboratory or the office during the daylight hours and spends some amount of leisure time at his lodge in the evening. There he will briefly discuss security with Luke Farway before going to sleep.

OIL DRILLING STATION

This large drilling station is topped by a 150 ft (45 m) tall oil rig and is covered with warning lights and satellite/radio communication dishes that link the station to Base Camp on Mary Island. The interior of the facility contains the main working of the drill and the pipes that process the crude oil into holding tanks near the dockside. At any given time there are between 40-50 people working at the station. Connected dangerously to the drilling station itself, is a barracks style living space for one hundred workmen. This design has been reported to authorities as a violation of many safety codes and there are pending lawsuits being handled by the GloboChem legal team. So far GloboChem hasn't bothered to change the layout, claiming that it is

convenient and productive for workers to live next to their work place.

The facility also includes numerous break rooms, decontamination rooms, chemical storage areas, a cafeteria, and large communal bathrooms. There is also a four vehicle garage which is usually filled with storage delivery trucks that are often loaded with barrels of oil.

The drilling captain, who is responsible for managing the workers and maintaining a level of production, is named Jersey Hudson. Mr. Hudson is generally no nonsense and refuses to believe that there is any troubling situation on the island beyond his daily safety issues in pumping crude oil out of the ground.

OIL TANKER DOCK

Built to accept the St. Mary oil tanker which arrives once a month, the oil tanker dock is filled with systems to siphon oil from holding tanks into the tanker. The docks themselves are often strewn with spare machinery, crates, and other supplies lashed down by tarps and cables.

The dock is run by an engineer named Bill Walker, an eccentric Texan, who always seems to be chewing tobacco. Mr. Walker likes to spin stories about huge fish that

he's seen in the waters around the dock to fellow employees. Bill is worried about the rumors of GloboChem actually killing its work force to cover up something the higher-ups don't want released to the public. He has seen no sign of it, but has come to suspect that the company is run by the Mafia; and Dr. Kennedy is responsible for the death of his nephew Brandon Walker who recently went missing.

SOUTH PORT (CAT ISLAND)

This large dock allows access for supply ships and other big boats. Usually at least two speedboats are kept here at the docks at all times. There are often numerous crates of supplies and chemicals, cranes, and forklifts sitting along the docks. Typically a few workmen patrol here during the day when the weather is clear, trying to clean up the clutter.

VILLAGE ISLAND

Unlike the other islands, Village Island has no GloboChem buildings, although signs of construction are present in the form of cinder block foundations and stakes in the ground in several areas. The reasons can be found fairly quickly atop one of the hills that have been excavated for what were intended construction purposes. Among the layers of rock has

been exposed a massive fossil bed, much of which was already damaged during the attempted construction. The site has been blocked off for further development until a paleontology team can come down from Anchorage and recover all the fossils, so far there has been a delay due to funding and concerns about the disappearances. A character with a Science background—with a bonus for specialty in Paleontology—can make an examination of the site.

Clue 5 (3 successes in Science)

The fossils in the fossil bed include prehistoric animals associated with this region up to about 65 million years ago. Dinosaurs native to the region are present along with several previously undiscovered species. Among these new fossils are what appear to be bipedal, almost humanoid, dinosaur-like creatures. The creation of the fossil bed seems to be the results of a volcanic explosion and magma flow, capturing the dead animals and preserving them. Anyone who has seen a living or dead member of the Keet Ku can match many of the unidentified fossils as ancestors of the current members.

COMPLICATIONS

Depending on the goals of the players, whether they are trying to expose the mys-

tery of the island or solve it covertly—there are a variety of complications that can occur. The Storyteller may use any of these complications to move the story along, raise the level of challenge for characters investigating the islands, or to provide dire consequences for failed actions.

Storm-Front: Weather scanners indicate that a massive storm front is about to hit the island. A bad storm can kick up rough waves which make sea travel dangerous if not impossible to smaller craft and lightning strikes might cause power outages from electrical burnouts. Most buildings have backup generators in case of such things, but important systems like the tram rail might be down during the storm, making travel difficult and possibly stranding the cars in inconvenient places on the island. In such cases, personnel will be sent in trucks to rescue the stranded personnel—but things could go bad in the intervening time. Flooding caused by rains and tidal waves could also make roads muddy or impassable, further complicating things. The penalties for awareness rolls and ranged combat in a storm could be anywhere from -1 to -3. With the sun's rays reduced by heavy storm clouds, the Keet Ku may be able to operate in the daylight hours of the storm and with the rain making it harder to see or shoot them, the Keet Ku

are at a definite advantage for close combat ambushes.

Reporters: If the players are trying to keep the incident under wraps, it may prove difficult if another death or disappearance occurs on the island. Media and reporters from Anchorage may arrive around the island or attempt to gain access. News choppers may do flybys during the day and a ferry could bring journalists with cameras looking to get information. If the players are associated or working for the company, they may be asked to take care of public relations and answer questions for the media, otherwise Luke Farway will present basic facts of the incidents to the news. Additionally, freelance journalists may sneak their way onto the islands, either as new employees or simply stalking around. Luke Farway may assume the arrivals are ecoterrorist saboteurs and begin sending armed workmen after them. The sneaky approach may put the journalists in unwitting danger from Farway or the Keet Ku, and whether or not the players rescue them could be a test of moral character.

The Earthquake: The islands where GloboChem's operations are set-up are heavily volcanic, as is much of Alaska. This is the reason it was chosen as a spot for building the world's largest operational

geothermal power plant. This geothermal power plant has, unbeknownst to many except perhaps Dr. Kennedy himself, been causing a leak of lava from the Earth's core into the hollow tunnels below the islands and parts of the ocean. A major Earthquake may occur at the epicenter of the islands (rating nearly an 8.8), damaging a lot of GloboChem property and even affecting the nearby city of Ketchikan. The Earthquake causes more complications however, forcing roughly three hundred Keet Ku from their homes once and for all, and dumping lava into the ocean where the waters boil. The damage to wildlife in the ocean is severe and rescue workers on and off the islands will be overworked. The Keet Ku will likely be swarming over the island and perhaps even swimming to the mainland wilds of Alaska to cause an epidemic of "animal attacks" and disappearances which will soon plague Alaska unless the player characters can do something about it. This is a dire event and if the characters can discover the true effects of the geothermal power plant before the earthquake, they can prevent this disaster from occurring.

Ecoterrorists: Many environmental groups suspect GloboChem of doing dastardly deeds on the islands and some extremists may even go so far as to attempt



A.N.P.S.

The **Alaskan Natural Protection Society** is a group that has chosen to live in a small sustainable community outside of Ketchikan called the “Gaia Ranch,” they have begun talking with the family members of the missing workmen and typically ally themselves with the Tribal Council when opposing corporate abuse of the natural environment. The group was begun by Nathan Alms, a California-native environmental activist who decided to put his ideology and love of nature to the test and moving to Alaska. He began a self-sustainable community of fifty some people, many former residents of California, to create a community that could exist outside the American system of Capitalism. For the most part they have been successful; using heated indoor gardens and combinations of solar and wind power with biofuel powered generators. Nathan Alms finally had enough after he started hearing about the disappearances and considers GloboChem to be killing its own people in order to prevent knowledge of their damage to the environment from reaching the mainland. He’s not sure what they’re doing, but he knows it’s bad and has decided to act with a dozen members of Gaia Ranch.

sabotage island. Sneaking their way onto the island in small craft at night or under cover of storm, they may look to find major systems—such as the geothermal power plant—to be targets of bombs or sabotage. The terrorists are probably lightly armed with handguns or rifles, but unlikely to shoot anyone except in self-defense. Their goals are not to kill anyone, but to damage, delay, or destroy vital assets of the company so that they will reconsider using the islands as a research station. They will likely make demands before or after setting the explosives or sabotage, demanding that GloboChem withdraw its presence from Alaska and especially Mary and Cat islands. Provided in a sidebar are details for the ecoterrorist group “*The Alaskan Natural Protection Society*” or the A.N.P.S. Stats on their leader and a typical member are given on page 82.

HUMAN ALLIES & ANTAGONISTS

Pages 82-86 list the statistics for important NPCs on and off the island as well as generic statistics for GloboChem workers.

NONHUMAN ANTAGONISTS & ALLIES

Statistics are also given for animals and creatures that are native to the islands (page

86). Natural attacks for animals use the brawl skill.

KEET KU NOT DANGEROUS ENOUGH?

Maybe you’re finding that the Keet Ku are pushovers for the characters for your **World of Darkness** chronicle—maybe the character’s endowments, disciplines, or similar supernatural powers utterly destroy these creatures in a one on one fight...well there are options.

FIGHTING AT NIGHT

You want to really play up the danger of the Keet Ku, remember to use the concealment modifiers for darkness from page 162 of the **World of Darkness** book or rules for fighting blind on page 166. This is **World of Darkness** after all and the Keet Ku are nocturnal monsters, rendered even more invisible during the cover of night. If the players do not have personal light sources at night (not too mention completely incapable of locating a motionless opponent hiding nearby), they may be rendered completely blind by darkness. Unless it is a particularly starry or moonlit night, the woods where the Keet Ku hide would still be masked in complete darkness even on such a night from the thick tree canopy and underbrush,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 88

NATHAN ALMS

Virtue: Faith – Mother Nature has her laws.

Vice: Wrath – Those who overstep their natural role must pay for their sins.

Mental:

Intelligence 3
Wits 2
Resolve 4
Physical
Strength 2
Dexterity 3
Stamina 3

Social:

Presence 3
Manipulation 3
Composure 2

Mental Skills:

Academics (2 dots)
Computer (2 dots)
Investigation (1 dot)
Medicine (1 dot)
Politics (2 dots)
Science – Environmental (3 dots)

Physical Skills:

Athletics (1 dot)
Brawl (1 dot)
Firearms (2 dots)
Stealth (1 dot)
Survival (4 dots)
Weaponry (1 dot)

Social Skills:

Animal Ken (1 dot)
Intimidation (1 dot)
Persuasion (3 dots)
Subterfuge (1 dot)

Traits:

Health: 8, Willpower: 6,
Morality: 8, Size: 5, Speed:
10, Initiative Mod: 6,
Defense: 2, Armor: 2/3
(Flak Vest)

Merits:

Status - A.N.P.S. (5 dots)
Allies – Environmentalists (3 dots)
Safehouse – Gaia Ranch (5 dots)
Fast Reflexes (1 dot)

Attacks:

Survival Knife, Damage: 1 (L), Size: 1, Durability: 3
Blackjack (Sap), Damage: 1 (B), Size: 1, Durability: 2, Notes: Stun Effect*
Colt .45 Pistol, Damage: 3, Range: 30/60/120, Capacity: 8+1, Strength: 2, Size: 1/S
Hunting Rifle, Damage: 4 (9 again), Range: 200/400/800, Capacity: 4+1, Strength: 2, Size: 3

*If damage exceeds the opponent's Stamina score, target is stunned and loses next action.

TYPICAL A.N.P.S. ECOTERRORIST STATISTICS

(12 men and women)

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Wrath

Attributes:

Intelligence 2, Wits 3,
Resolve 4, Strength 2,
Dexterity 3, Stamina 1,
Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills:

Academics 1, Science 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Firearms 2, Larceny 2, Stealth 1, Weaponry 2, Animal Ken 1, Intimidation 1

Traits:

Willpower: 7
Morality: 8
Initiative: 6
Defense: 3
Speed: 10
Health: 6

Merits:

Status – A.N.P.S (1 dot),
Allies - Environmental (3 dots), Quick Draw (1 dot)

Attacks:

Survival Knife, Damage: 1 (L)
Colt .45 Pistol, Damage: 3, Range: 30/60/120, Capacity: 8+1
Shotgun, Damage: 4 (9 again), Range: 30/60/80, Capacity: 8+1
Hunting Rifle, Damage: 4 (9 again), Range: 200/400/800, Capacity: 4+1
Pipe Bomb, Damage: 4, Blast Area: 3, Throwing Modifier: -1
Molotov Cocktail, Damage: 2, Blast Area: 2, Throwing Modifier: -1

COLONEL JACK OLDEN

Head of the Ketchikan State Troopers

Virtue: Justice – The law will tame the frontier.

Vice: Sloth – There is no need to overextend oneself over a lost cause.

Mental:

Intelligence 2
Wits 3
Resolve 2
Physical
Strength 2
Dexterity 2
Stamina 3

Social:

Presence 5
Manipulation 2
Composure 3

Mental Skills:

Investigation – Search and Rescue (2)
Medicine – First Aid (1)
Politics (3)

Physical Skills:

Athletics (1)
Brawl – Takedown (3)
Drive – Offensive Driving (2)

Firearms (3)
Stealth (1)
Survival (3)
Weaponry (2)

Social Skills:

Animal Ken (1)
Intimidation –
Interrogation (4)
Persuasion (2)
Subterfuge (2)

Traits:

Health: 8, Willpower: 5,
Morality: 7, Size: 5,
Speed: 9, Initiative Mod:
5, Defense: 2, Armor:
2/3 (Flak Vest)

Merits:

Status – State Troopers (5)
Allies – Emergency
Services (2)
Contacts – Law
Enforcement (3)

Attacks:

Glock 22, Damage: 3,
Range: 30/60/120,
Capacity: 10+1,
Strength: 3, Size: 1

Model 870 Shotgun,

Damage: 4 (9 again),
Range: 30/60/80,
Capacity: 8+1, Strength:
3, Size: 2

JOHN KOWEE

Head of the Ketchikan Tribal Council

Virtue: Faith – The old stories have wisdom and there is balance in the world.

Vice: Lust – Love waits for no man.

Mental:

Intelligence 2
Wits 3
Resolve 4
Physical
Strength 4
Dexterity 2
Stamina 4

Social:

Presence 3
Manipulation 1
Composure 3

Mental Skills:

Academics – Tribal Law (2)
Computer (1)
Occult – Tribal Legend (2)
Medicine (1)
Politics – Indian Affairs (3)

Physical Skills:

Athletics (2)
Brawl – Street fighting (3)
Drive (1)
Firearms (1)
Stealth (2)
Survival (3)
Weaponry – Knives (2)

Social Skills:

Animal Ken (2)
Empathy (3)
Expression – Tribal Ritual (2)
Intimidation (2)
Persuasion (3)

Traits:

Health: 12, Willpower:
7, Morality: 8, Size: 5,
Speed: 11, Initiative
Mod: 5, Defense: 2,
Armor: None

Merits:

Status – Tribal Council (5)
Contacts – Alaskan Indian
Community (3)
Iron Stamina (3)

Attacks:

Survival Knife, Damage: 1
(1), Size: 1, Durability: 3

Double Barrel Shotgun,
Damage: 4 (9 again),
Range: 30/60/80,
Capacity: 2, Strength: 3,
Size: 2

Storyteller's Option: If you are running a *Werewolf the Forsaken* chronicle or simply feeling malicious, John Kowee would make a good werewolf or wolf-blooded NPC to throw into the mix. The template has not been added, but it should be an easy addition.



HORNER FREEMAN

Meddling journalist, anchor-man and lead reporter for the Ketchikan Daily News

Virtue: Hope – Things are bad, but by showing people the truth, they'll get better.

Vice: Pride – I'm the only real journalist these people have got, they better start listening.

Mental:

Intelligence 3
Wits 4
Resolve 2
Physical
Strength 1
Dexterity 2
Stamina 1

Social:

Presence 4
Manipulation 4
Composure 3

Mental Skills:

Academics (2)
Computer (2)
Occult (1)
Politics – Alaskan Politics (2)

Physical Skills:

Athletics (1)
Brawl (1)
Drive - Boat (1)
Larceny - Lock picking (1)
Stealth (2)

Social Skills:

Expression – Journalism (4)
Intimidation (2)
Persuasion (2)
Subterfuge – Leading the Interviewee (3)

Traits:

Health: 6, Willpower: 5,
Morality: 6, Size: 5,
Speed: 8, Initiative Mod:
5, Defense: 2, Armor:
None, Derangement:
Narcissism

Merits:

Status – Ketchikan Daily News (3)
Contacts – Ketchikan City Government (2)
Barfly (1)
Encyclopedic Knowledge (4)
Fame (2)
Resources (2)

Attacks:

None

LUKE FARWAY

Head of GloboChem Security and Industrial Engineer

Virtue: Fortitude – I can survive anything.

Vice: Pride – In order to keep my job I can't show any weakness.

Mental:

Intelligence 2
Wits 3
Resolve 3
Physical
Strength 3
Dexterity 4
Stamina 3

Social:

Presence 2
Manipulation 2
Composure 3

Mental Skills:

Investigation – Corporate Security (2)
Medicine – First Aid (1)
Science – Industrial Engineering (3)
Politics (1)

Physical Skills:

Athletics (2)
Drive (1)
Brawl (2)
Firearms (3)

Stealth (2)
Survival (3)
Social Skills:
Intimidation (1)
Persuasion (1)
Subterfuge (2)

Traits:

Health: 8, Willpower: 6,
Morality: 5, Size: 5,
Speed: 9, Initiative Mod:
7 (10 with a firearm),
Defense: 3, Armor:
None, Derangement:
Narcissism, Suspicion

Merits:

Status – GloboChem Corporation (3)
Quick Draw (1)
F.S.: Combat
Marksmanship* (2)
F.S.: Sniping* (1)

Attacks:

S&W Airlite .44 Mag. Revolver, Damage: 3 (9 again), Range: 35/70/140, Capacity: 6, Strength: 3, Size: 2
Barrett M-98 Rifle, Damage: 5, Range: 250/500/1,000, Capacity: 10+1, Strength: 3, Size: 3

*Merits are detailed in the WoD Armory book.



DR. MURRAY KENNEDY

Chief Director of the GloboChem project on Mary and Cat Islands

Virtue: Prudence – Never jump to conclusions without proof, I'm a scientist after all.

Vice: Greed – I was selected for the job because I can keep my eye on the bottom-line.

Mental:

Intelligence 5
Wits 2
Resolve 2
Physical
Strength 1
Dexterity 2
Stamina 2

Social:

Presence 1
Manipulation 4
Composure 2

Mental Skills:

Academics (3)
Computer (2)
Investigation (1)

Science – Geology,
Chemistry (5)
Politics – Business (2)

Physical Skills:

Athletics (2)
Drive (1)
Firearms (1)
Survival (1)

Social Skills:

Persuasion (2)
Socialize (3)
Subterfuge (3)

Traits:

Health: 7, Willpower: 4,
Morality: 6, Size: 5,
Speed: 8, Initiative Mod:
4, Defense: 2, Armor:
None, Derangement:
Fixation

Merits:

Status – GloboChem
Corporation (4)
Resources (4)

Attacks:

Glock 17 Pistol, Damage:
2, Range: 20/40/80,
Capacity: 17+1,
Strength: 2, Size: 1

The Puma Air Rifle does a flat 1 point of bashing damage and injects the victim with a tranquilizer dart load. The creature must make a Stamina+Resolve check with a -1 penalty for every additional dart or remain unconscious for 10 minutes per dart. The dart loads are usually measured out for the body weight of an animal to be the target. If the target is a size bigger than the intended victim, the target receives a bonus equal to the number of their size difference from the intended target.

(Bonus = Size – Intended Target's Size)

DR. MARTIN GILLARD

Chief Biologist of the GloboChem ecological research center

Virtue: Hope – I can help to keep the islands clean of pollution.

Vice: Sloth – I am helpless to do anything about the disappearances.

Mental:

Intelligence 5
Wits 2
Resolve 2
Physical
Strength 1
Dexterity 2
Stamina 2

Social:

Presence 2
Manipulation 2
Composure 3
Mental Skills:
Academics
Academics (2)
Computers (2)
Investigation (1)
Medicine – Veterinarian (4)
Science – Biology (4)
Politics (1)

Physical Skills:

Athletics (1)
Drive (1)
Brawl (1)
Firearms – Tranquilizer
Guns (2)

Stealth (1)
Survival – Animal Capture
(2)

Social Skills:

Animal Ken (4)
Persuasion (1)

Traits:

Health: 7, Willpower: 5,
Morality: 7, Size: 5, Speed:
8, Initiative Mod: 5,
Defense: 2, Armor: None,
Derangement: Suspicion

Merits:

Status – GloboChem
Corporation (2)
Resources (2)
Contacts – Environmental
Community (1)

Attacks:

Puma Air Rifle, Damage:
1B*, Range: 40/80/160,
Capacity: 1, Strength: 1,
Size: 3

Flare Gun, Damage:
-1L*, Range: 20/40/80,
Capacity: 1, Strength: 1,
Size: 1

The flare gun does a flat four points of damage and on an exceptional success the target catches fire and burns for 1 lethal damage per round until extinguished.

*The full description of the dart gun and flare gun is in the Hunter book.

TYPICAL GLOBOCHEM WORKER

Virtue: Temperance

Vice: Sloth

Attributes: Intelligence 2,
Wits 2, Resolve 2, Strength
2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2,
Presence 2, Manipulation 2,
Composure 2

Skills: Computer 1, Science 2,
Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Drive
1, Firearms 1, Survival 2,
Weaponry 1, Persuasion 1

Traits:
Willpower: 4
Morality: 7
Initiative: 4
Defense: 2
Speed: 9
Health: 7

Merits:
Status - GloboChem (1),
Resources (1 dot)

Attacks:
Makeshift Club, Damage:
2 (B)
Survival Rifle, Damage: 4,
Range: 150/300/600,
Capacity: 5+1

Starved Lynx

Virtue: Temperance

Vice: Gluttony

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve
2, Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 1,
Presence 1, Manipulation 1, Composure
2

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 2, Stealth 4,
Survival 2

Merits: Brawling Dodge (1)

Traits: Willpower: 4
Initiative: 6
Defense: 3
Size: 3
Speed: 14
Health: 4

Attacks: Claws, Damage: 1(L)

Skittish Moose

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve
4, Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3,
Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure
1

Skills: Athletics-Swimming 3, Brawl 3,
Stealth 1, Survival 3

Merits: Brawling Dodge (1)

Traits: Willpower: 5
Virtue: Temperance
Vice: Gluttony
Initiative: 5
Defense: 3
Size: 7
Speed: 20
Health: 10

Attacks: Antlers, Damage: 3 (L)

Frightened Deer

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve
2, Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 1,
Presence 1, Manipulation 1, Composure
1

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 2, Stealth 2,
Survival 2

Merits: Brawling Dodge (1)

Traits: Willpower: 4
Virtue: Temperance
Vice: Wrath
Initiative: 4
Defense: 2
Size: 4
Speed: 20
Health: 5

Attacks: Antlers, Damage: 2 (L)

Charley Brown the Brown Bear

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 2, Resolve
3, Strength 7, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4,
Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure
2

Skills: Computer 1, Science 2, Athletics 2,
Brawl 1, Drive 1, Firearms 1, Survival 2,
Weaponry 1, Persuasion 1

Merits: Iron Stamina (3)

Traits: Willpower: 5
Virtue: Temperance
Vice: Sloth
Initiative: 4
Defense: 2
Size: 7
Speed: 14
Health: 14

Attacks:
Claws, Damage: 2 (L)
Bite, Damage: 1 (L)

KEET KU “THE KILLER FLOOD TIDE

Monstrous Reptilian Horrors

Mental:

Intelligence 1
Wits 3
Resolve 2
Physical
Strength 6
Dexterity 4
Stamina 4

Social:

Presence 2
Manipulation 1
Composure 4
Mental Skills:
Crafts –Cave Painting, Trap Making (3 dots)

Physical Skills:

Athletics –Swimming, Climbing (3 dots)
Brawl -Claws (2 dots)
Stealth (4 dots)
Survival –Fishing (4 dots)
Weaponry (1 dot)

Social Skills:

Intimidation (2 dots)
Expression (2 dots)

Traits:

Health: 10, Willpower: 6, Size: 6, Speed: 15,
Initiative Mod: 8, Defense: 3, Armor: 2/2
(Natural scales)

Merits:

Iron Stomach (2 dots)
Strong Back (1 dot)
Quick Healer (4 dots)

Attacks:

(*Natural Attacks use Brawl skill)

Natural* Bite, Damage: 2(L)

Natural* Claws, Damage: 3(L)

Dread Powers (from *Hunter the Vigil*):

Chameleon Skin (4 dots) The Keet Ku has a chameleon skin that changes color and texture to match surroundings. This power mim-

ics “Lurker in Darkness” in that it adds dice to the Keet Ku’s Dexterity+Stealth pool, but with the added fact that it costs the Keet Ku no Willpower to activate and can be used reflexively at any time. With this ability a Keet Ku can seem to vanish without a trace when fleeing from combat or ambushing prey. The Keet Ku can move up to twice his dots in speed per round while keeping the bonus. The bonus provided is only for natural environments such as woodlands or rocky areas, in urban areas the bonus may be reduced or negated altogether at the Storyteller’s option.

Note: If the Keet Ku is motionless in natural environments, treat the added dice as automatic successes—at least 4 successes needed to spot a Keet Ku who is attempting to remain hidden. Rolls need only be made if the Keet Ku is attempting to move while hiding.

Scaled Hide (2 dots) Keet Ku have a scaly hide similar to alligators that provides them with 2 points of armor against melee weapons and firearms.

Night Sight (1 dot) The Keet Ku can see in complete darkness, but this ability leaves it vulnerable to bright lights which temporarily blind it and they suffer a -3 penalty to all rolls during daylight.

Amphibious (1 dot) The Keet Ku can be submerged for long periods of time, twenty minutes per dot of Stamina, before it needs to resurface for oxygen.

Note: For those who don’t have the *Hunter: the Vigil* book, I’ve presented and detailed completely new and unique abilities to represent the dread powers of the Keet Ku so that there would be no complications in running this scenario in other WoD game settings.

Description

The Keet Ku are an evolution or perhaps mutation of prehistoric dinosaurs into intelligent beings that walk on two legs. They have lived in Alaska for a long time, eating fish and mating in the steam tunnels below

volcanic islands. Most were killed off by the Native American tribes when they settled in the area who feared them as demons. Some survived in the tunnels below and their numbers have once again risen. The creatures are frequent swimmers and fishers. They live in social units based on physical dominance and have an unstructured

society except as far as mating, eating, and the creation of tools are practiced. Members of the tribe will just as soon leave as kill each other. The Keet Ku practice primitive artwork that resembles the drawings of early cave men.

Spending so much time underground, the Keet Ku have developed sophisticated eyes that allow them to see in complete darkness (bright light however inflicts a -3 penalty to their actions). Keet Ku spore is green, yellow, and white and smells of ammonia. It is found in Styrofoam-like clumps.

The Keet Ku communicate in a series of low growls which almost sound like radio static until one listens carefully enough. They are intelligent enough to operate as a team for ambushing larger or more dangerous prey, they also are strong enough to lift heavy rocks and cut down trees for use in traps to catch prey.

Keet Ku are not used to hunting animals on dry land and are likely to spend a lot of time observing them in order to determine their defenses. Keet Ku typically take their kills back to their underwater caves to save or share with close relatives, although the lava leaking into their tunnels from the geothermal plant will prevent them this luxury. In the caves of their home lie the bones and shredded belongings of all the men that have gone missing on the islands, as well as the remains of many surface animals.



so staying on a road or near civilization would be a must.

SPIRIT GIFTS

The Keet Ku may have bonds with various spirits on the island, a result of their tribal communion with the spirits of the locus at the central lake on Mary Island. These spirit-granted gifts could be replicated using the Gifts from *Werewolf the Forsaken*, granting them similar strength and power to Werewolves themselves. There are also powers from *Second Sight*, *Inferno*, and similar books that could provide gifts to worshippers of a powerful spirit or demonic entity. It's your chronicle, use what fits.

LIZARD STEROIDS

The Keet Ku stats are only suggestions; you can increase their physical or mental stats and make them into real monsters. Also, you can up the damage on their claws and bite to the point where they are simply walking swords. These are just suggestions. You can also make them regenerate like Werewolves or Vampires (you can use Willpower in place of Vitae or Essence), that would be a kicker.

KEET KU TOO DANGEROUS?

It might be that you find one Keet Ku to be enough to slaughter the whole group in one combat—that is quite possible; this is *World of Darkness* right? Well here are a couple suggestions on how not to murder everyone.

NERF THE KEET KU

You can always reduce the stats, size, health, or get rid of the armor altogether and make the Keet Ku a less formidable opponent. Alternatively, you can have the player characters encounter younger members of the Keet Ku (which are likely to be not only smaller and less tough, but less strong or deadly as well). These juvenile Keet Ku may also be less intelligent or have less tactical capabilities as their larger parents.

THE PREDATORS ARE CAUTIOUS

This is all new to the Keet Ku, they have managed to snag a few humans and get a taste for flesh, but it is not like they are used to hunting humans or really any land animals; they are better at fishing. The Keet Ku may hesitate at the moment where they should have been killing. They may not go for a kill at all, but try to simply grab a character and haul them off to the ocean for storage in their caves. They may simply

flee whenever they are spotted and hope that their traps do all the work for them. It should be easy enough to restrict the actual combat with the group to a minimum, the Keet Ku prefer to hide and they prefer a sure thing. If you find it implausible that such a dangerous beast would be so cautious, you only have to look to the behavior of mountain lions, bears, and other beasts of the wild. These hunters are all warm blooded and usually don't have to deal with prey even as big as man, while the Keet Ku may be used to being attacked by killer whales while diving for fish. This kind of experience can make them very cautious to not underestimate their prey.

UNEXPECTED ALLIES

Perhaps despite all your kiddy glove handling of the player characters, they have managed to get themselves in a corner with a vicious adult Keet Ku and you are not sure you want them to tear up their character sheets...well there are numerous potential human allies on the islands. Even the normally paranoid and egotistical Luke Farway may change his stance once he sees a monstrous reptile bearing down on a fellow human being. Armed GloboChem employees or even assaulting ecoterrorists may step in to save the day (in *Hunter: the Vigil*, they may even become



permanent allies for the future). Most of these potential allies carry heavy enough weapons to take down a Keet Ku when in numbers. In addition to human allies, the deep woods contain potential friends as well. Charley the Bear is more than capable of taking on a Keet Ku and might burst out of the forests to save the day. To the animal he's only forcing out an intruder, but to the player characters he would appear to be a godsend. Other animals may even help if cornered, like a charging deer or moose. These animals would likely only offer a momentary break from the Keet Ku's assault and are unlikely to stick around past an initial attack if escape is an option.

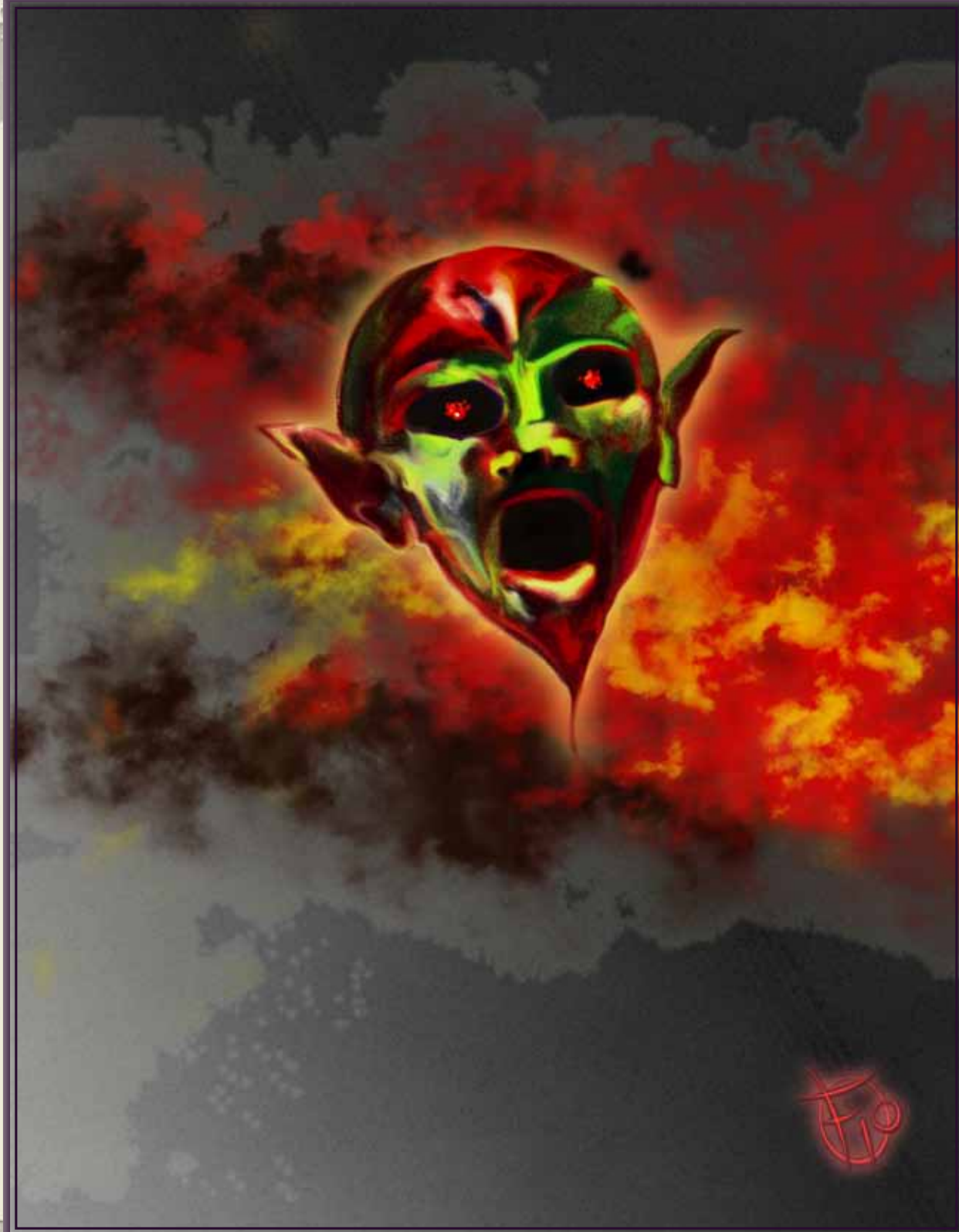


The process of delving into the black abyss is to me the keenest form of fascination.

H. P. Lovecraft

EFREET

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Forgive and Never Forget

Fiction
By Peyton Bisaillon

The man's body lay across the broken down tracks, water dripping from the run down ceiling into the empty eye sockets where his eyes once laid. Blood was delicately spattered all over the walls, floor, and my brand new white shirt. Looking down at his neck I saw a deep dark purple bruise where I had choked him. More bruises surrounded his face where I had brutally beat the man with no mercy or no sorrow. Several echoes of water dripping down onto the empty subway floor made me jump a bit though no one else was here.

Taking a step back from the body, I was in a panic. Dropping the chain I tried to keep myself calm, though looking at the body of a man who I killed didn't help much at all. As the rain hit my face, I realized that I helped the city out in a way. Looking at the body once more, I knew that I had killed a man.

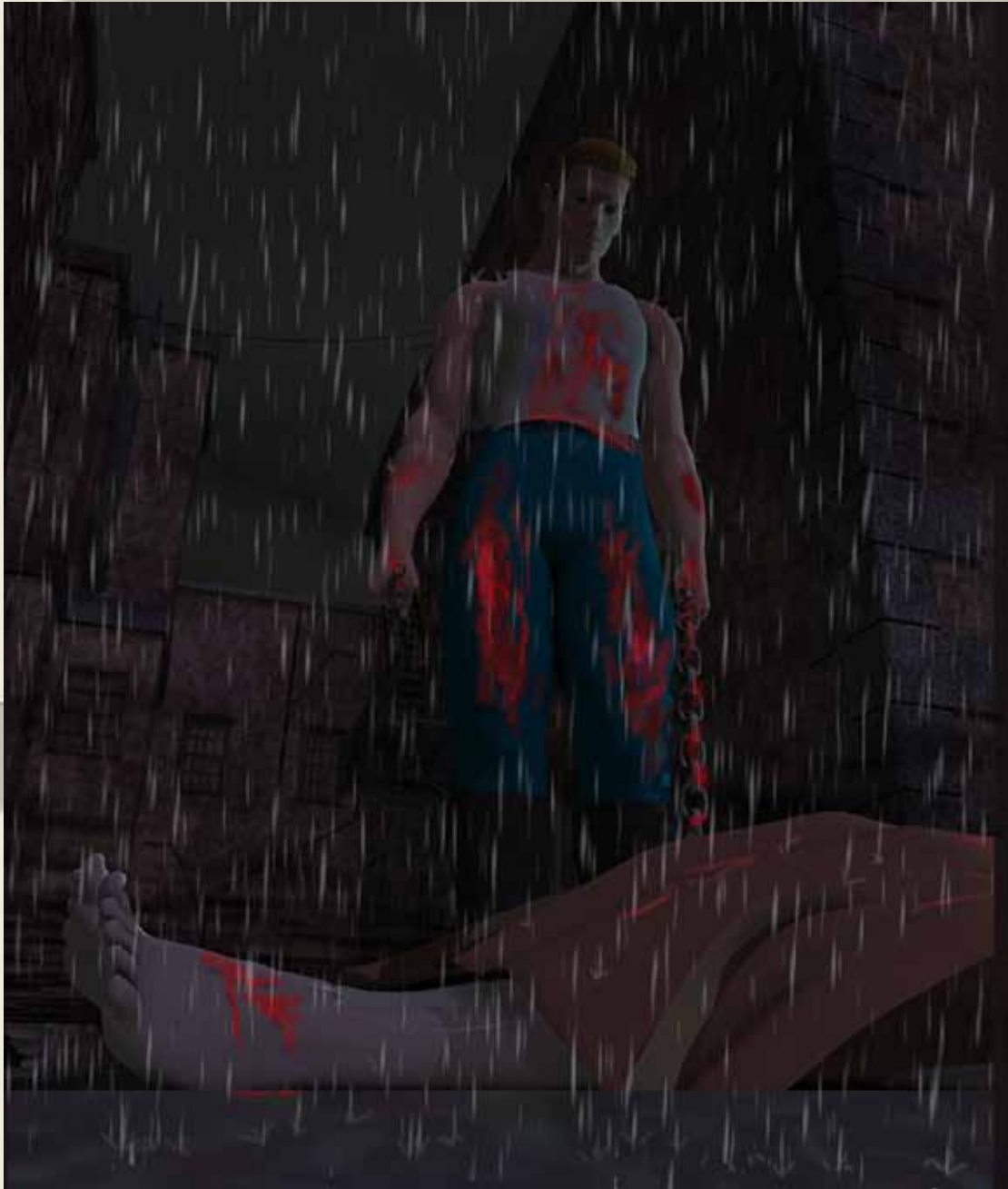
He was a man who had killed so many innocent people in his lifetime. Innocent people including my wife Felicia, but for some reason they let him go after six years. His name was Slater Weston, and I had been on his case ever since he killed my Felicia. Letting him free was the most ridiculous thing the city had ever done.

Thinking for a moment I knew that I had to move fast.

Looking at the dead body, I stood there considering what I had to do. I've been in this business for about seven years, so I know the do's and don'ts of hiding a crime. From this moment on I'd be thinking like one of those scummy demented men. It wasn't the greatest idea but I knew if I turned myself in I would lose my job, home, and my little girl Natalia. Natalia is the only thing I have left so I couldn't lose her.

Taking off my long wet trench coat, I bent down and wrapped the body in it the best I could. The man was light so he was very easy to carry. It must have been living in prison for so long that made him lose so much weight. As I placed him over my shoulders I felt sick, sick that I was carrying a man who had done horrible things to people. Every step I took with him on me, my stomach churned, my teeth clenched, and my body tensed as his cold pale hands brushed my back.

As I made it to the rundown parking lot, I looked around. The coast was clear; well I couldn't see why someone would come round this part of town. Walking to my car the rain was very harsh. Smacking down on my face as I walked, it seemed that it was



trying to punish me for what I did. Once I got to the car I opened the trunk as fast I could and forced the body into it. As the door to the car opened, lightning crashed across the sky in front of the car.

Turning the car on, its engine roared seeming like it wanted to be heard. Shaking my head I started to drive. Pulling out of the parking lot, rain continued to crash upon the window. Grunting, I really hated the weather. Everything was working against me but it didn't matter, I did what I did and I did it for peace so my Felicia could rest.

As I drove the only thing I could think of at the moment was back at the subway when I killed that man. I had followed him into the subway, rain poured and lightning crashed as I walked. Following the man I hated so much. As lightning crashed I stood there waiting for the attack I would make.

As he turned around I punched him dead on. Tossing him to the ground and beating him like the mad man I had become. I found a spare rusted bar from the tracks and started hitting him with it. That was where all the blood had come from. As I bashed the man's face in I heard a plea for forgiveness. I found it funny how a man who killed so many people was begging for



his, when he hadn't listened to those who cried for their lives. I couldn't stop, I just continued on and on.

Finally as he coughed up blood, I pulled the thick silver chain from my coat and placed it around his neck. Pulling it as hard as I could, hearing the man gasping and gagging for air, watching his body squirm trying to fight me off. Now he knew how it felt since he did the same thing to many innocent people. Soon he went quiet and a pale arm hit the floor, I had done what I needed to do.

The memory was still there and I lost track of time. I continued to drive and it was a nice sight to see that the rain had finally stopped. Twelve-fifty was the time, ten minutes to one. I drove until past the outskirts of town, to the nearby forest. Pulling the car over and quickly getting out, I ran for the trunk. Opening it, grabbing the body, I started to run into the forest.

The sick feeling came back as I carried the man's body. His feet kicking my spine, it felt like he was alive trying to break free from my hold. I knew it couldn't be true since I killed him but everything seemed to be playing against me lately. Ever since I killed him everything went down hill from there.

But I didn't care at all anymore even if they hated me. I did something good for the people...that is all that matters. As I continued to run, I was slowing down; the weight of the body was trying to stop me. At this moment I needed to move fast and get it over with. Once it was over with I could go home.

Standing in the middle of the forest I saw a huge gaping ditch there. It saved me from digging a hole myself plus it gave me some time. Tossing the body into the pit, I heard a couple of snaps; his neck must have broken as he hit the rock. Staring at the body I slowly reached in my pocket to pull out my matches. Tossing the small little stick of fire, I watched as it landed on the man.

I watched the body slowly, slowly being gathered into the flames. Burning the skin piece by piece and the left over clothing slowly lighting up into flames, leaving the scent of fresh burning flesh. I knew I was done. Now I could go home and rest, go back to my regular life and forget that this had ever happened. Turning around I started to walk away from this little memory that will be forgotten.

When I got home my little girl Natalia slept on the couch. Patting her head I walked over to the library. Natalia had been

in there again sorting and cleaning it all up from the mess I had left it. All the books were in alphabetical order from A to Z. She even had the fire place going; she must have been cold. I looked at my shirt, it was still covered in blood, I had to burn it and get rid of it. As I went to undo the first button I heard something.

"Dad, are you alright?" asked a soft voice coming from the door. There stood Natalia, scared once she saw the blood on my shirt. The look in her eyes made me think over what I had done. I killed a man who was a criminal and by killing that man I had become a criminal too. At that moment I knew that she knew that something was wrong. Nothing would be the same anymore; my mind finally got the best of me. I needed to do what was right.

Walking over to her I placed my hands on her shoulders. With a simple smile I told her, "Go get your things, I'm taking you to your aunt's." She just nodded without saying anything. She knew I did something wrong and she knew I was going away for it. She came back quickly and we left the house.

It wasn't long until we reached her aunt's place. Looking at her I gave her a hug, "Be careful." was all she said, and then she left the car. I watched her leave, then I drove



off heading over to the police station. It was for the best. I knew I'd lost everything. What could I say? My own mind got the best of me in the end. Telling me what I did was wrong and I had to pay for it because if not I would have turned into a mad man.

As I drove, the car suddenly stopped right outside the station. I tried opening the door but it was jammed. Looking over I saw the front of the car caught on fire. Being trapped in a car while it was on fire only meant one thing. This was what I was going to get for killing someone. I was going to pay for the sin I committed. I was supposed to be the good guy the one who followed justice but in the end my own anger and vengeance got the best of me. Now I was going to die here and pay for the death I had caused. I was stupid to think I could forget about it but every time I looked at the fire that was eating the car I kept on thinking about what had happened. I could hear people outside screaming, calling someone to call 911.

Sitting in my car I just smiled and then leaned back in my car waiting for the moment for when I would die. The only thing I could think at that moment was, "My name is Xavier Winchester. I killed a man."

The last sound I heard was a loud explosion...

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The Voice of the Ancient Bard

Youth of delight come hither:
And see the opening morn,
Image of truth new born.
Doubt is fled & clouds of reason
Dark disputes & artful teasing.
Folly is an endless maze,
Tangled roots perplex her ways,
How many have fallen there!
They stumble all night over bones of the dead;
And feel they know not what but care;
And wish to lead others when they should be led.

—William Blake, 1757-1827





Alternatives

Just lately there has been some discussion on the *Dark Conspiracy* forums about ways to incorporate and combine aspects from different systems. In one post I referred to the style of contemporary horror & conspiracy game that I run as “**Beyond the Dark Twilight Matter Conspiracy Chill Green X Tabloid of Cthulhu**”. Gathering material from other sources than just the game you are running has been part of gaming since before I got into the hobby, and that’s been a while now (ahem).

A prime example of this is Linden Dunham’s piece in this issue on running *Dark Conspiracy* in the *Cold City* setting. We have an older game setting, DC, that can be tweaked very neatly to fit in with a current, modern, up-to-date system but on the face of it the two seem very different. Linden has done a great job, even choosing adversaries from one system and slotting them seamlessly into the other’s setting.

It goes further than just borrowing ideas though; respected gaming blogger Berin Kinsman (aka Uncle Bear) came up with his *ROLPunk Manifesto* a little while ago, and I have to say I wholeheartedly agree with the sentiment behind it...salvage whatever works for your game, no matter what other people think, and ignore the rest of the BS. This is, in many ways, a modernised and slightly swearsy version of what Gary Gygax himself wrote in the original D&D DM Guide:

“The referee is the final arbiter of what happens.”

Of course, the man himself also said that “DMs only roll dice for the sound they make”, and “the secret we should never let the gamemasters know is that they don’t need any rules”. If that isn’t the guy who first quantified the hobby into book form telling us to do what we want, then I am obviously misreading the words!

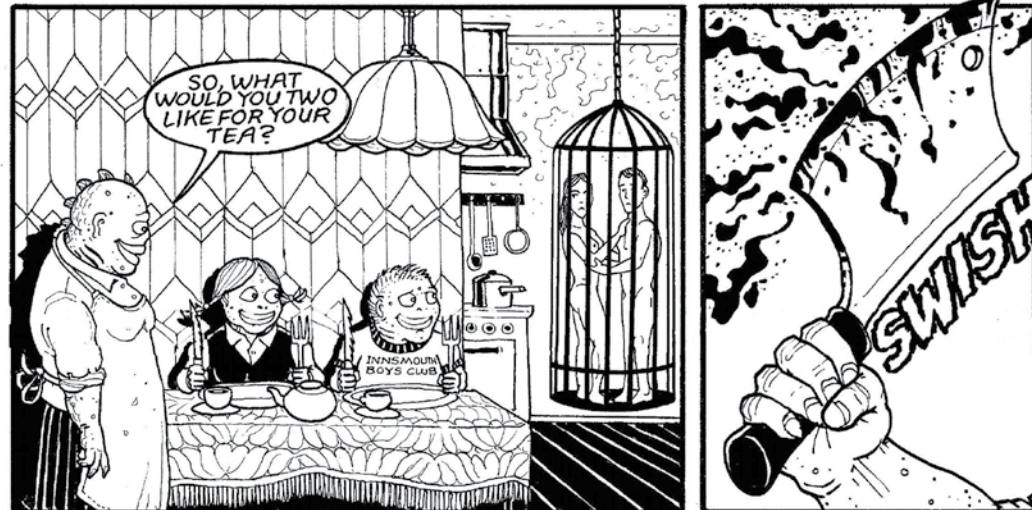
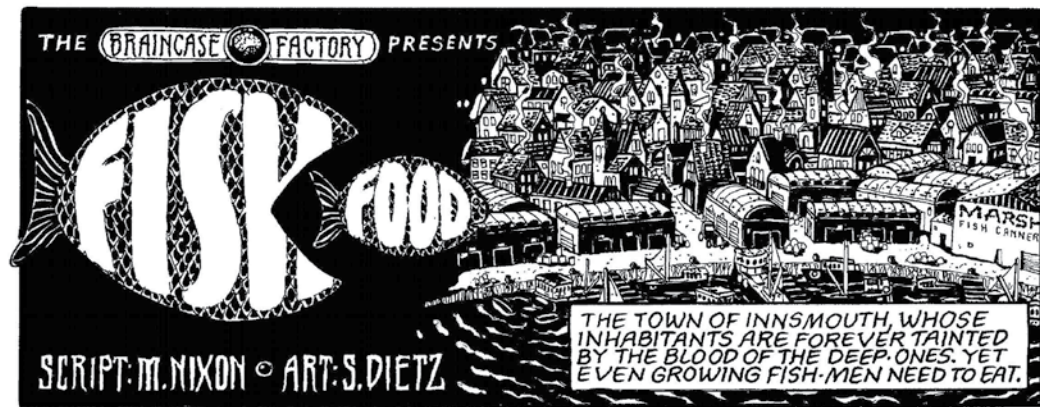
--Cheers! Lee



STAATSOOPER UNTER DEN LINDEN, BERLIN, 1945

Fish Food

Cutting Humor
By The Braincase Factory





WHO YR' GONNA CALL?

*All living souls welcome whatever they are ready
to cope with; all else they ignore, or pronounce to be
monstrous and wrong, or deny to be possible.*

✿ George Santayana

protodimension magazine